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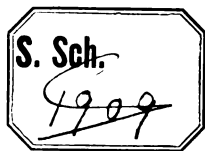
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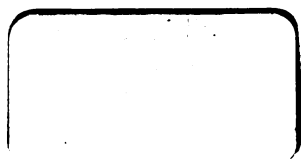
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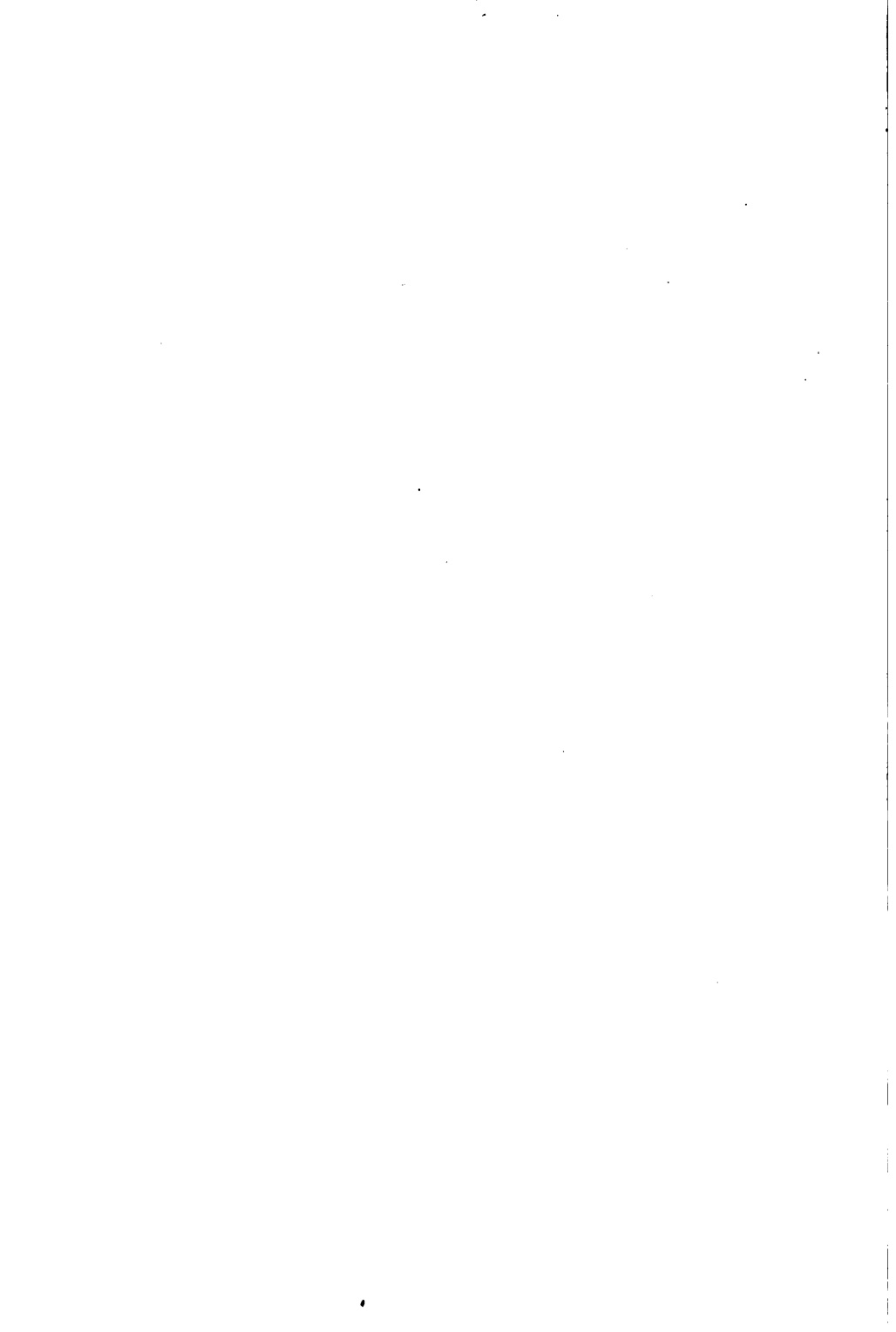
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The Beacon Series

A GRADED COURSE OF STUDY FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
81

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JESUS OF NAZARETH

BY
CHARLES EDWARDS PARK

UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY
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JESUS OF NAZARETH.

I. Birth.

LUKE II. 1-20.

A long time ago there was a carpenter who lived in a little town called Nazareth. His tools were simple and few, and the wood he had to work with was poor, so that he could not do the fine work carpenters do nowadays. His name was Joseph, and he was quite poor. But he married a girl named Mary, and lived humbly and contentedly in his little house in Nazareth. Mary would do the simple housework and would spin flax or grind barley, while Joseph worked busily with his tools, and so they got along quite nicely.

One day Mary was made very happy by God whispering in her heart that she should very soon have a little child. That was good news to Mary, and, as she thought about it, she determined that she would name her baby "Jesus."

Now, some time after Mary had learned this good news, Joseph came home one day and said they should have to go to Bethlehem, another town, on some matter of business. So he saddled his patient little donkey, and put Mary on its back, and took his staff, and set out for Bethlehem. But when they reached Bethlehem, he found that there was no room for them in any house or at the inn. So he went into a little stable of the inn, where the cattle lived, and he and Mary lay down in the sweet hay to sleep. That very night, as they lay sleeping on the hay in the stable, the little baby was born.

The good news had at last come true, and Mary was very happy indeed. She laid her little baby-boy in a manger, a trough out of which the animals ate their hay and grain, which made a very cosy crib for him.

Meanwhile a company of shepherds, who were watching over their sheep in the pasture outside of the town, were greatly startled to hear a wonderful voice which seemed to come to them out of the sky, and which told them that Jesus was to

be born that very night. They determined to go at once and see this baby. So they found the stable, and were the first persons to give their welcome to the little child Jesus.

1. In what country were the towns of Nazareth and Bethlehem?
2. What name does that country bear to-day?
3. In what province was Nazareth? In what province was Bethlehem?
4. What famous city was very near Bethlehem?
5. Who was Cæsar Augustus?
6. Why was Joseph obliged to go to Bethlehem?
7. Why did they take up their quarters in a stable?
8. How many years ago was Jesus born?
9. What do we call his birthday?
10. Aside from his parents, who were the first persons to see Jesus after his birth?
11. How did these men know about his birth?
12. How did people travel in those days?

II. Bad News.

MATTHEW II. 1-13.

Mary and Joseph had to stay some time in Bethlehem, and the stable was the only place they could find to live in. But pretty soon people in the village began to hear the news, that a little baby had been born there in that stable, and lots of visitors came to see him.

One day among these visitors there came three strange, tall men, who evidently lived in a foreign land. They were very kind indeed to Mary and Jesus, for they gave him some beautiful little golden trinkets, and some incense and myrrh, which is a fragrant ointment something like perfumery. They said they had come from the East, and were going down to Egypt, and they thought they would stop and see this little baby, because they knew he was going to be a great man.

It seems that these three men were magi, or wise men, who lived in a country where people were very fond of studying the stars. They had seen some curious and remarkable constellation in that part of the heavens which had been allotted to the fortunes of the Jewish nation. From seeing this constellation, they had come to the conclusion that there must be some great king or prophet, perhaps even the Messiah, just born in the Jewish country. So they stopped on their way to Egypt to pay their respects to him. It was queer enough to see these tall, dark strangers, with their foreign dress and priceless gifts, bending over a humble manger in a Judean stable. It filled Mary's heart with awe and wonder, and on the whole she was quite relieved when, with a farewell salaam, they mounted their white camels and went their way.

That night poor Joseph had a dream, which came perhaps as a result of this visit. He dreamed that what these wise men had suggested was true, that his little baby-boy was indeed the great Messiah, sent from Heaven to be king over the Jews instead of Herod. In his dream he thought he saw Herod very angry at the birth of this little baby, so angry that he was

determined to kill him. We may be sure that Joseph awoke with a start, and slept but little more that night, and, when morning dawned, he lost no time in telling Mary his evil dream. They were childish, superstitious people, who believed in dreams. It seemed to them that this nightmare was undoubtedly the work of God's warning angel, telling them the bad news so that they could escape in time.

1. What name was given to these three strangers?
2. From what country did they come?
3. To whom did they first apply for guidance?
4. By what shrewd answer did Herod conceal his real feelings?
5. How were they led to the house where Jesus was living?
6. What is frankincense? What is myrrh?
7. Why did they not return to Herod, as he had asked them to do?
8. How was Joseph warned of Herod's jealousy?
9. Whither was he bidden to fly?
10. Why should Herod wish to injure the little baby?
11. How far was Bethlehem from Jerusalem?
12. What sort of a king was Herod?

III. A Hurried Flight.

MATTHEW II. 13-18.

It was plain that something must be done at once. Jerusalem was only two hours' walk from Bethlehem, and Herod's soldiers might arrive at any moment to carry out the threat, and make the bad news which Joseph dreamt come true. Not a moment was to be lost. The first thing to be done was to get out of the country with all speed, for of course Herod could not touch them in any country but his own.

Now, if you will look again at the map, you will see that the shortest way to get out of the country from Bethlehem is to go straight south. But Joseph did not choose that route, because it would take him right into the burning deserts of Arabia, where they would certainly perish of hunger and thirst. The next shortest way out of the country is to travel east, and cross the Jordan River. But Joseph was too wise to choose that route, because he knew that the ravines and river bottoms of the eastern wilderness were full of wild beasts and robbers, among whom his sweet young wife and little boy would be in great peril.

There was only one way left. He must travel westward, along the paths and country lanes, until he struck the great caravan road which skirted the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, running from Egypt to Babylonia. Once on that road, the little fugitive family would be safe, for it was a famous, well-trodden highway. People called it "the Sea Road." There would surely be many kind-hearted travelers and merchants on it who would protect and help them.

Joseph's plan was speedily made, and in a very few minutes the donkey was saddled again, and Mary seated on its back holding her precious child, while Joseph, with his staff, took the bridle and started quietly off. The journey was made by easy stages, and pretty soon they reached the pleasant country of Egypt, where they lived in safety until the jealous old King Herod died.

1. Why did Joseph start by night?
2. How was Herod "mocked by the wise men"?
3. How did this mocking make him feel?
4. What fearful deed did he order his soldiers to commit?
5. What was his purpose in committing such an outrage?
6. How old were his victims?
7. How many victims do you suppose there must have been?
8. How long do you think it took Joseph and Mary to reach Egypt?
9. What animal did people in those days use for desert travel, and why?
10. What kind of wild animals lived in those regions?
11. Why was the great highway which Joseph followed called "the Sea Road"?
12. Do you know any of the stories that are told of the incidents that befell them upon this journey?

IV. Growing Up.

MATTHEW II. 19-23; LUKE II. 40.

It is hard to say just how long Joseph kept his family down in the land of Egypt or just what they did while they were there. The old legends tell us a few things about their visit,—how they camped out under palm-trees, how the good fairies came and took care of them, and how the birds used to flutter about the little baby and delight him with their bright plumage and graceful motions.

But pretty soon Joseph had another dream. This time it was a good one. He dreamt that King Herod was dead, and that now there was no one in the whole country who would wish to hurt his little boy.

So Joseph, believing his dream was true, saddled his donkey again, and again the little family started joyously forth along the level Sea Road, to go back to their own land and their simple home in Nazareth. In due time they arrived safe and sound, and were cordially welcomed by their friends.

At this time Jesus might have been two or three years old, and, as he had never seen his own home, it was all very interesting and exciting for him. So he quickly grew up in that quiet little Galilean village, just as lots of other children around him were growing up. Nor was Jesus the only child in the family. For his father Joseph had been married before, and had four sons and at least two daughters, all of whom were older than Jesus. We know the names of Jesus' brothers. They were Joseph, called after his father, and James and Simon and Judas. We do not know the girls' names.

Jesus and his brothers made friends among the little village children, and played games with them in the sunny street. Their amusements were not unlike our own. They liked to play with wet clay, making mud pies or birds and animals. They liked to play wedding, when they would all form in a procession and go dancing and singing down the street, just as people did in real weddings.

When Jesus got a little older, he went to school in the synagogue, where he sat on the floor with his back to the teacher, and studied his lessons out loud. It made the school-room a very noisy place, but still the scholars had to be good and study hard, for they had a very strict teacher. After school he used to come home and help his father in the carpenter's shop. In this quiet and busy manner Jesus gradually became a strong, intelligent boy.

1. Who succeeded Herod as king of Judea?
2. Where did Joseph take his little family to live on his return?
3. How many brothers and sisters did Jesus have?
4. What were the brothers' names?
5. What makes us suppose that they played wedding and funeral?
6. How did they play wedding? How did they play funeral?
7. Where did they go to school?
8. What did they learn in school?
9. In what kind of a house did they live?
10. What kind of clothes did they wear?
11. What did they have to eat?
12. Why did Jesus expect to become a carpenter?

V. The Great Passover Feast.

LUKE II. 41-52.

Jesus was not at all tied down to a monotonous routine of school and work. It is true his father was a poor man who needed all the help he could get; and his family, like all humble Jewish families, had but two meals a day. It is true the teacher in the synagogue school was strict, and made the scholars work hard. But there were ample chances for frolic, and there were frequent holidays.

The Sabbath, for instance, was observed very strictly as a day of rest and joy. It was a day on which no work of any kind could be done, but it was not a day of stiff and irksome indolence. It was a day for going to church and for relaxation and change. In addition to the weekly Sabbath there were three great annual feasts, and many lesser ones, which required from two to eight days to celebrate.

Chief among the feasts was the great Passover, which came early in spring, and which all who possibly could were expected to attend. It was held in Jerusalem, and it lasted eight days. Jesus had never been to a Passover, but when he was twelve years old, and could understand a good deal of what he saw and heard, his father consented to take him. So, when the time came, they joined a little company of friends, and went to Jerusalem.

We can well imagine that Jesus had a splendid time. The sights were all so new and wonderful. The massive walls and glistening roofs of the great city filled him with delight. He wandered around through the city and all through the beautiful temple, and, when it came time to go home, he forgot all about the three days' journey and the friends who would miss him. His parents looked for him the first night out, but he was nowhere to be found. They went back and searched the city, but in vain. Then Mary remembered how interested he had been in the temple, and she and Joseph went there to look,

Sure enough, in a secluded corner, seated in the center of a group of grave, learned Rabbis, was Jesus. He was asking them questions, and they were wondering at his intelligence. His face was radiant with interest and excitement. When his mother reproached him, and told him how they had searched everywhere for him, he replied quietly, Why did you hunt so for me? Did you not know that I should be in but one place, here in God's temple? So they found him, and started back again, and soon overtook their friends. But from that time Mary and Joseph realized that their son would be a thoughtful, serious-minded man, to whom the deeper problems of life and law were of first importance.

1. How much of a journey was it from Nazareth to Jerusalem?
2. How did people make this journey?
3. Where did they stay in Jerusalem?
4. What great building in Jerusalem was the center of common interest?
5. How far had Joseph and Mary gone on their return before they missed Jesus?
6. How long did they hunt for him in the city?
7. Where did they finally find him?
8. What was he doing?
9. With what words did Mary rebuke him for giving them such a fright?
10. How did he reply?
11. In verse 49, to whom does he refer by the word "Father"?
12. What event in Jewish history does the Passover commemorate?

VI. The Fearless Preacher.

MATTHEW III. 1-12; MARK I. 1-8; LUKE III. 1-20.

From the age of twelve until he became a full-grown young man we know nothing at all about Jesus. These were years of great excitement in Judea. The people were sure that God would send them a messenger to conquer their enemies and to organize them into the greatest nation on earth. Every one was trembling with eagerness at thought of the Messiah who was about to come.

One day, some ten or fifteen years after Jesus got lost in Jerusalem, there came to Galilee a rumor which caused great excitement and set everybody talking. The rumor said that a wild-looking man had suddenly appeared near Jerusalem from the southern wilderness, and had begun to preach and promise that the Messiah, the great king whom God should send, would very shortly come.

This wild-looking preacher was named John. Very few people knew where he came from or what family he belonged to. He was about thirty years old, and all he wore was a mantle, or tunic, of camel's-hair cloth, such as the desert wanderers in the south made. He had also a belt of coarse leather around his waist, and his face was pinched and brown. What with his bright eyes and long, streaming hair, he made a very strange, impressive figure. People said he had lived in the wilderness all his life, eating only the honey of wild bees and the locusts, or grasshoppers, which he could catch in abundance, and which make very good eating, if they are fried in butter.

But the most remarkable thing about this man was the way he preached. Such fervent, earnest oratory had not been heard since the days of the prophets, and people swarmed out from all the region to hear him. Throngs went every day from Jerusalem, and curious or interested listeners came from the towns to the north, and some even from Galilee.

When Jesus heard these rumors of John and of his won-

derful preaching, he determined to go and hear him. He had been thinking quietly, all his life, about the Messiah whom God was expected to send, and he had his own ideas of what his office and work should be. He thought he should like very much to hear what this fearless hermit had to say about him. So Jesus joined a small party of young enthusiasts who all wanted to see this strange man, and, leaving the home and the carpenter-shop, started off for Jerusalem with his friends. He little thought how momentous a step he was taking, and how changed a man he would be when next he saw that humble home and that busy little shop again.

1. What was the preacher's name?
2. Why is it right to call him a fearless preacher?
3. Where had he been living before he began to preach?
4. How was he clothed and what did he eat?
5. What did he urge people to do, if they wished to belong to the Messiah's kingdom?
6. Where did he baptize them?
7. What nation did the Jews regard as their greatest enemy?
8. Why did the Jews believe that their Messiah would come just at that time?
9. What do the words "Christ" and "Messiah" mean?
10. How did the Jews expect to recognize their Messiah when he came?
11. How did John reply when the people asked him if he was the Messiah?
12. Was there any relationship between John and Jesus?

VII. Finding his Work.

MATTHEW III. 13-17; MARK I. 9-11; LUKE III. 21-22.

A small company of young men could travel sixty-five or seventy miles very quickly. It was not long before Jesus and his companions reached the vicinity of Jerusalem. They began to meet other little companies, all headed in one direction. Guided by these, they soon reached the quiet little spot on the Jordan River where John was living, and where he preached every day. They found quite a throng there, seated on the grass or standing around in easy attitudes, and all listening intently to a tall, gaunt figure, who was pouring out a perfect torrent of stirring words.

It was not long before Jesus was intensely interested. The preacher was telling about the Messiah, how he would shortly come, and what kind of a ruler he would be. He said that this Messiah would come very soon to organize a great kingdom, the greatest in the world, and that, while none but Jews would belong to that kingdom, yet not even all Jews would be admitted, but only those who repented of their sins and determined to live better lives. He warned them that, if they wanted to belong to this kingdom, they must prepare themselves by discarding their sinful ways and changing their manner of life.

Then he said he was the forerunner of the Messiah, sent to prepare the nation for his coming, and he invited all who agreed with him, and who would promise to follow his advice and prepare themselves in the truer way, to be baptized in the Jordan River.

Now Jesus had listened with beating heart and flaming eyes. This man had said just what he had secretly believed all along. He agreed with him perfectly. Moreover, it seemed to him his plain duty to adopt John's work and become a prophet of the Messiah. It was the best service he could render. The carpenter-shop seemed far away and unimportant compared to this urgent duty which John's preaching

had revealed to him. It came over him like a flash. Here was the work God meant him to do! He had found it at last. It was a critical moment in his life, but he made the resolution bravely and completely. He would be a preacher and a reformer as John was. He would spend his time and strength in the great task of preparing his countrymen for the coming of their King, so that, when the time came, they should be ready to welcome him.

With this determination he entered the river and was baptized by John. When he came out of the water, he was a changed man, for he had found his work.

-
1. Did John want to baptize Jesus?
 2. Why did he hesitate?
 3. What did it mean that a man was baptized by John?
 4. How was the baptism done, do you suppose?
 5. Where was it done?
 6. What wonderful thing happened as Jesus came out of the water?
 7. Why should we think that Jesus had no particular interest in his carpenter work?
 8. Why did he go into the carpenter's trade?
 9. How old do you suppose Jesus was at the time he changed his work?
 10. Did Jesus wait until John was arrested before he began to preach?
 11. Where did he go to do his preaching, and why?
 12. In what way does his preaching resemble John's?

VIII. A New Home.

MATTHEW IV. 12-16; LUKE IV. 14-30.

Very shortly after Jesus had been baptized in the River Jordan, a serious disaster befell the man to whose preaching he had listened and at whose hands he had received his baptism.

John was one of those fearless men who will speak the plain truth to everybody without thinking of consequences. He did not know what it meant to be politic or cautious. He had found occasion in one or two of his sermons to condemn very bitterly the private life of one of the prominent men in the country, Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. This Herod Antipas had done some wicked things, which John promptly denounced in his fearless and fiery way. As a result, Herod's officers came one day and arrested John, and put him in prison, so that his career as a preacher was cut suddenly short. When Jesus heard this news, he felt that his own actions must be determined by John's fortune. Now that John was shut up in prison, Jesus saw that it was more than ever his duty to take John's place and preach about the Messiah, but he also saw that, if he began to preach in that neighborhood, around Jerusalem, he might expect much the same fate. He considered his mission too important to be exposed to any such peril, so he decided to go back to Galilee, to his own home, and begin his preaching there.

But, when he got there, he found still another difficulty waiting for him. The people of Nazareth had known him ever since his childhood. He had grown up among them. It would be embarrassing, to say the least, to go back to that old home, where he had always been known as a quiet, humble carpenter, and set himself up as a preacher and a prophet. People would pay no heed to him. They would be too familiar with him and his family to give him the respectful attention he should demand. So he decided to go to the near-by town of Capernaum, where he was a stranger, and start his new life in that new home.

Some time later a little thing happened which showed the wisdom of this change. After he had been in Capernaum a while, he made a visit to Nazareth one Sabbath day, and, entering the synagogue, he rose to speak to the people. At first they were astonished. They said to each other, Why, is not this Joseph's son, Jesus the carpenter? Do not his mother and his brothers all live among us? But later on, when Jesus said something they did not like, they got so angry with him that they seized him, and would have done him hurt, but that he managed to escape from them. After that he returned to his new home in Capernaum, and had nothing more to do with Nazareth.

1. What do you understand to be the "power of the Spirit"?
2. What day of the week did the Jews observe as the Sabbath?
3. How came it that Jesus was allowed to stand up in the synagogue to teach?
4. What kind of a book was handed to him?
5. From what Old Testament prophet did he select his text?
6. How did the people receive his preaching?
7. What violent attempt did they make upon his life?
8. Where did he go to live after this?
9. What is the sea, mentioned in Matthew iv. 13?
10. What were its names, and how big was it?
11. What was the principal industry of Nazareth? of Capernaum?
12. What famous proverb is taken from this lesson?

IX. Making Friends.

MATTHEW IV. 18-22; MARK I. 16-20; LUKE V. 1-11.

Although Capernaum was near Nazareth, it was a different kind of a place. It was a busy, thriving little village, built on a beautiful plain running along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Unlike Nazareth, where the principal occupation was farming and sheep-raising, Capernaum's chief industry was fishing. The shore of the lake near the town was lined with funny little fishing-boats, with tall, graceful lateen sails, and with long fish-nets spread out on the decks to dry in the sun. The little fresh-water fish were caught, sometimes in vast quantities, and were cured either by drying or by pickling in brine, and, thus prepared, formed an important article of food for the poorer people of Galilee.

Jesus was greatly attracted by these curious fishing-boats and by the sturdy men who worked in them. He would often go down to the shore and watch the little craft swinging at anchor, or get to talking with the fishermen themselves as they sat in their boats and mended their nets. In this way he made a number of friends.

He liked especially one old man named Zebedee, who had two young sons about Jesus' own age, James and John. He used to sit for hours talking with these three, telling them about the kingdom and the Messiah, while they would get so interested in his talk that they would forget their broken nets, and would listen, open-eyed, to his earnest words.

Then there were two other men of whom he was very fond. They were Simon and Andrew, two brothers, who owned a boat together, and carried on an active industry. They were somewhat older than he was, but they grew to love him and respect him very highly. These four men, Simon and Andrew and the two sons of Zebedee, soon became the dearest friends Jesus had in Capernaum, so that finally they all decided to give up their fishing, and simply become companions of his, following him everywhere and learning to preach as he preached.

In this way there was started a little company of warm friends, who gathered around Jesus, and who made themselves partners in his work and in his hopes. There were in all twelve in the company. Most of them were fishermen, but some were farmers and shepherds, and one was a tax-collector. But, whatever their work was, they all came to have such a warm liking for Jesus and such an enthusiasm for the work he was doing that they gave up their lives to the pleasant task of following him and helping him. They called themselves his "disciples", which means his "pupils".

1. What was Simon's other name, and what does it mean?
2. What were Simon and Andrew doing when Jesus saw them?
3. What occupation did Jesus promise to teach them?
4. Where were James and John when Jesus saw them?
5. According to the story in Luke, why did Jesus step into one of the boats?
6. What remarkable thing happened when he asked Simon to let down his nets?
7. What did Simon do and say when he saw this wonder?
8. What business relation existed between James and John and Simon and Andrew?
9. How many disciples were there in all, and what were their names?
10. What is a disciple?
11. Do you know what the occupations of some of the other disciples were?
12. In what way did they help Jesus, and why did he feel the need of their help?

X. A Wonderful Discovery.

MARK I. 21-28; LUKE IV. 31-37.

Of course, this company of young men who went around always together, and who always preached or talked about the kingdom of God, attracted a good deal of attention in Capernaum. People in those days were even more deeply interested in the kingdom of God than we are to-day in the great political or social questions of our time.

Jesus had no difficulty whatever in interesting people about his work, especially as he talked about it so earnestly. A great many people heard him preach, not only in Capernaum, but from towns roundabout. They began to know him by sight and by reputation. They began to look upon him as something of a man, because he talked so convincingly, and so clearly.

Now one Sabbath day Jesus went into the synagogue with his friends, and began to talk to the people. At once the room was still. Everybody wanted to hear what this famous man would say. They sat silently on the floor, and drank in his words. Suddenly right in the midst of the stillness there came a startling interruption. It came from a poor man over in the back corner, who was not perfectly well. He was subject to occasional spasms, or fits. Whenever such a fit seized him, he would throw back his head, and roll his eyes, and clench his hands, and shriek aloud, no matter where he was. Quite a number of people in that country had this ailment. They used to say it was because a devil, or a bad spirit, lived in them, and made them do these strange things. This poor fellow had a fit right in the middle of Jesus' talk. It was a startling interruption. Everybody turned to see what the matter was.

Jesus also turned, and saw the sick man shaking his head from side to side and rolling his eyes. So he pointed directly at him with his finger, and said very firmly, Hold thy peace! And then a wonderful thing happened. Instantly the fit left the poor victim. He raised his head and looked quietly at

Jesus, as much as to say, Yes, Master. He was cured of his illness. Every one in the synagogue was astounded. How did Jesus cure the man? Where did he get the power to make him well?

We cannot help feeling that Jesus himself was amazed at finding that he had such an influence over sick people. He was looked upon by the superstitious Galileans with even greater awe. People talked about his power, and brought their friends to be healed. It was a great discovery, and added greatly to his opportunity. And Jesus, in a very noble way, accepted this new power as a solemn trust, and used it faithfully in curing and quieting the sufferers he constantly saw about him.

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1. Where was Jesus teaching one Sabbath day?
 2. What strange interruption stopped him in the middle of his talk?
 3. What was the trouble with this man?
 4. Was this a common ailment in that country?
 5. What words did the man utter?
 6. How did Jesus answer the sufferer?
 7. How did this affect the man with the unclean spirit?
 8. What does it mean by saying that "the unclean spirit came out of him"?
 9. What did the people think when they saw this incident?
 10. Was this power of casting out demons peculiar to Jesus, or did others possess it?
 11. How did this power increase his influence?
 12. Was Jesus himself glad to find that he had this power?

XI. An Open-Air Church.

MATTHEW V.-VII.; LUKE VI. 20-49.

The discovery of this power was a great help to Jesus, because it enabled him to do so much practical good to the unfortunates who came to hear him. Before long every one in Capernaum was talking about the quiet, grave-eyed man who could cure some forms of sickness simply by the strength and calmness of his personal influence. People came eagerly, in great numbers, to see him, and hear him preach about the Messiah who was coming to establish the kingdom of God.

Jesus himself believed the Messiah might come almost any minute, and most devout Jews shared this expectation. Therefore, Jesus was all the more anxious to get people ready for him. To do this, they must be induced to repent of their old sins and live more cleanly and nobly, for it was only clean and noble men and women whom the Messiah would take into his kingdom. So Jesus preached constantly, urging every one to better living; and the people came in such crowds to hear him that no one house could hold them all.

It was for this reason that one fine morning, when hundreds of people had assembled to listen, Jesus led the whole company out to a nearby hillside, where they all sat down around him on the soft grass, and had an outdoor church. Jesus sat in the center, and preached them a long, beautiful sermon. We may read the entire sermon in the Gospel of Matthew. It is called "The Sermon on the Mount," because Jesus preached it outdoors on this hillside. It told people how they must act and live to become worthy of the kingdom of God.

One striking thing about the sermon is that it is still true. It was preached nearly two thousand years ago, and the kingdom of God has not quite come yet, but the instructions in that sermon for entering that kingdom are just as true and just as important for us to-day as they were for the Galilean people to whom they were uttered almost two thousand years

ago. The three chapters in Matthew rank among the most beautiful and most famous passages of the world's literature. There are portions which every one should know by heart, as, for instance, the first twelve verses of chapter v., and in chapter vi., verses 5 to 15.

We may see in this sermon how fond Jesus was of nature, how observant he was of birds and flowers and grasses and rain-storms. In all these things he seemed to see the workings of God's just and loving spirit, and was glad and proud to feel himself a son of that great God who worked and breathed in the life and beauty around him.

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1. What name is given to the passage in Matthew v. 1-12?
 2. What is the appropriateness of this name?
 3. What is a jot and a tittle?
 4. What does "Raca" mean?
 5. Can you find the Old Testament commandments which Jesus quotes in verses 21, 33, 38, and 43 of chapter v.?
 6. How does he improve upon these old commandments?
 7. Reading Matthew vi. 2, do you suppose that the hypocrites really "sounded a trumpet" when they gave alms?
 8. What do we call this way of talking?
 9. What name is given to the passage in Matthew vi. 9-13?
 10. Who was Solomon?
 11. Can you describe a "lily of the field"?
 12. What is a mote? and what is a beam?

XII. A Trip across the Lake.

MATTHEW VIII. 23-34; MARK IV. 35-V. 20; LUKE VIII. 22-39.

Jesus did not stay always in Capernaum. He made frequent trips to the towns in the neighborhood. Chorazin, Bethsaida, Magdala, Tiberias, Emmaus, Cana, Nain, Scythopolis,—all these places he visited. He thought it his duty to preach to as many people as possible.

One day he determined to cross the Sea of Galilee, and visit one or two towns on the other side. It was a short journey. He and the disciples embarked in a fishing-boat, and sailed merrily along. Jesus leaned back upon the stern seat, and soon fell asleep. All at once, when they were about halfway across the lake, a furious squall struck them. It was so violent, and the waves ran so high, that everybody got frightened. They ran to Jesus and woke him up, and said, Master, help us, or we will all drown. Jesus very calmly asked them, Why are you afraid? And, sure enough, in a very few minutes the squall stopped,—the disciples firmly believed that Jesus made it stop; and they went sailing on their way.

As soon as they landed on the other side, the first person they saw was another of those poor men who were half crazed by epilepsy. He was prowling around in a rude little graveyard, and, as soon as he spied Jesus and his friends, he came rushing out to meet them, almost like a wild animal. But Jesus, you remember, possessed a wonderful influence over such unfortunate creatures, and it was not long before this savage man began to feel this influence from his strong and quieting personality, so that he acted and looked just like an ordinary person.

But, as they all walked along, a swineherd met them, who was so astonished to see this poor outcast walking soberly along with a company of strange men that he rushed off to the village and spread the report that a wonderful magician was coming, who had already cured the lunatic and had made his herd of swine crazy instead. This report frightened the

villagers. They did not know what this magician might do to them. So they came out to meet Jesus, and begged him to go away. Jesus saw that he could not preach to them, that in their fright they would neither listen nor believe, so he and his friends turned back and launched the boat again, and returned to Capernaum without mishap.

1. Into whose boat might Jesus have entered in order to cross the lake?
2. What happened as soon as they got fairly started?
3. What did the disciples do in their terror?
4. What country lay upon the other side?
5. Who were the first persons that they saw?
6. What were their names?
7. What happened after Jesus had cured them?
8. What request did the citizens make of Jesus?
9. Why did they wish him to go away?
10. What did the man who had been cured ask to do?
11. Why did not Jesus grant this request?
12. Why could he not preach in that country?

XIII. Days of Happiness.

MATTHEW IV. 23-25; MARK I. 35-39.

The time passed very rapidly with Jesus during this period of his life. He was surrounded by friends who not only loved him, but looked up to him, calling him their leader and their master. He was eagerly welcomed everywhere he went, and his words were received with quiet, grateful respect. People visited him constantly either to ask questions or to be helped in some illness or malady by his wonderful power.

Most of all, Jesus himself took an intense pleasure in his work. He was doing the thing he was best fitted to do. He felt that he was working at just the task God wanted him to adopt. He threw himself heart and soul into his duties, with a joyousness and an earnestness that made it seem not at all like work.

This, of course, was the principal secret of his happiness.

To be sure, there were times when he got very much discouraged. No one seemed to understand him sometimes, not even his disciples, who were his nearest and dearest friends. People were apt to judge him by themselves and to think him just as self-seeking and greedy in all he did or tried as they themselves were. They seemed to be unable to understand that he was working from the noblest and most unselfish of motives; and, whenever Jesus saw this, it made him very unhappy. But, when these times of discouragement came, he found a safe and certain remedy in his constant feeling of companionship with God.

Jesus knew perfectly well that, however grossly his fellow-men might misjudge him, his Heavenly Father knew him as he really was, and loved him and blessed him as he really deserved. So, when the discouragement came, he would slip away from the multitudes who tired him with their dreary, stupid questions, and go out to some lonely hillside, away from everybody, and there he would spend a quiet hour alone, praying to God.

When he came back, he would be prepared to take up the work again, being strengthened with an inner serenity which the affairs of the world could not destroy. Such trying times, however, were infrequent. The long golden days glided rapidly by, filled full of work and hope. It was the happiest time in all his life, being made so by his own devotion and fidelity.

1. In what province did Jesus do most of his work?
2. What are the natural boundaries of Galilee?
3. How large a region is it?
4. Where is the country of Syria?
5. What kinds of sufferers were brought to him?
6. Where was Decapolis?
7. What are the names given to the region beyond Jordan?
8. Where did he go a great while before day?
9. How do we know that he was sometimes misunderstood?
10. What was his great source of strength?
11. Was he welcomed and heard in every town that he visited?
12. What was the real basis of his happiness?

XIV. Becoming Famous.

MARK I. 32-34, II. 1-12; LUKE IV. 42-44.

They had no telegraph or telephone or morning paper in those days, not even a post-office department. When a man in Babylon wanted to send a letter to his brother in Jerusalem, he wrote it on a piece of papyrus or parchment, and then waited until some caravan of merchants should start from Babylon to go west. Then he would give it to some friend in the caravan, asking him to forward it to Jerusalem. This friend would take it as near to Jerusalem as he was going, and then give it to some one who, he knew, was going still nearer. In this way, after weeks and weeks of travel, passing through half a dozen hands perhaps, the letter would finally reach its destination. Of course, all news had to travel in the same deliberate fashion.

So, you see, it took some little time for the news of Jesus and his wonderful preaching, and still more wonderful powers, to reach the more distant parts of the country. However, Capernaum was a favored town, because it was right near a great caravan trail, and could receive news and send news much more quickly than many other little villages. So this is how Jesus gradually grew to be famous.

A caravan would halt at Nazareth, right near by, for the night, having come down from Damascus. Some one in the caravan would strike up an acquaintance with the citizen who sold him wine or flour for his supper, and would ask the news. The citizen would say, Well, there is a man in Capernaum who is preaching astonishing things about the Messiah and the kingdom of God, and he has a wonderful power over sick people, so that he can cure them. And some say that he even stopped a squall one day on the Lake of Gennesaret. The merchant, of course, would want to know all the details.

The next night perhaps the caravan would halt in Cæsarea, and the night after that in Joppa, and the night after that in Azotus, and in each place the merchant would tell all the story

he had heard in Nazareth about the remarkable man in Capernaum, and each time the story would be a little bigger.

And then perhaps another caravan would come into Nazareth, bound from Egypt to Antioch, and would hear the same story, and would proceed to scatter it along the road to the north, just as the first caravan had scattered it along to the south. In these ways, after three or four months, Jesus became quite a famous man. People came even from Tyre and Sidon to see him. They were all kinds of people,—Romans, Greeks, Canaanites, and Syrians; but he treated them all alike, and did his best to cure their ailments and to persuade and encourage them to a better and purer way of living.

1. Where is Babylon?
2. What is a caravan?
3. Can you find on the map the great caravan trail that ran through the country?
4. Where are Cæsarea, Joppa, and Azotus?
5. Where is Antioch?
6. Where are Tyre and Sidon?
7. Who were the Canaanites?
8. How did people send letters in those days?
9. What was the principal reason for Christ's becoming famous?
10. How was he interrupted one day as he was preaching in a house in Capernaum?
11. How did the sick man enter the house?
12. What were the first words that Christ spoke to him?

XV. Hints and Suspicions.

MATTHEW VIII. 1-4, IX. 30-31, XII. 15-16; MARK III. 7-12, V. 43, VII. 36, VIII. 26.

Jesus began to find that this reputation which he was gaining among the people of Galilee had its embarrassing side. Not only was he deprived of the freedom and the privacy which he formerly enjoyed, but he was also placed in a somewhat false position by the respect and the adulation he received.

You remember that Jesus, when he began his work of preaching, had no other idea than to warn people that the Messiah would come very soon, and to tell them how to get ready for him. The thought had never as yet entered his mind that he himself might be the Messiah. He considered himself simply a forerunner of his, like John. But the time was approaching for the dawning of the truth. When John first began to preach, he showed such power and earnestness that the people who heard him began to wonder if he might not actually be the Messiah. They came and asked him "whether haply he were the Christ"; and John always answered most decidedly that he was not.

Now the same thing began to happen to Jesus. When the people heard him preach and witnessed his cures, they at once jumped to the conclusion, in their eagerness, that this remarkable man must be the Messiah. Just hear how he talks! they said. See how the people flock to him! See what he can do for sick people simply by laying his hands on them! Surely, this man is the Messiah!

It shows how eager everybody was to have their Christ come. They were constantly on the watch, and anybody who seemed to possess extraordinary power was at once suspected. When these hints and suspicions were dropped into Jesus' ears, as they undoubtedly were sooner or later, he did not openly deny them, because he himself was not perfectly sure. These very hints and suspicions of the people were perhaps

what first caused him to ask seriously: Am I the Messiah? Am I the Christ whom the whole nation is expecting? So while he could not exactly deny the hints of his friends, still he resolved to give them as little cause as possible for suspecting such things about him.

He did not want to be pressed by their importuning, or carried away by their eagerness. He must have lots of time to think it over by himself. So thereafter, whenever he cured anybody, he made him promise to tell not a soul. After healing the two blind men, he said, See that no man know it; and again, after curing a large number, he charged them that they should not make him known. Jesus did not want to be talked about. He felt the need of time and privacy to think out the great problem which his friends' ready suspicions had hinted to him.

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1. What great leader were the people expecting at that time?
 2. How did they believe he would come?
 3. How had John the Baptist excited their suspicion?
 4. What did they begin to think when they saw Jesus performing his marvelous works?
 5. Among whom did these suspicions first arise?
 6. How did Jesus receive these suspicions?
 7. What was leprosy?
 8. Why did Jesus charge those whom he cured to tell no man?
 9. Why did the Pharisees want to destroy him?
 10. Did these people keep their promise to him?
 11. What kind of a Messiah did the Pharisees want?
 12. How would the Pharisees treat him if he should claim to be the Messiah?

XVI. A Secret Problem.

MATTHEW XIV. 22-23; LUKE V. 12-16, X. 21-24.

This hint which had been dropped into Jesus' mind by his eager followers, that perhaps he himself was the Messiah, was destined to play a tremendous part in his life. He could not altogether put the thought away from him. There may have been moments when he said to himself: No, it cannot be possible that I am the one whom God has chosen. Am I strong and good enough to do so great a work?

But there were other moments when the hint came to him with growing persistence. It gradually grew from being a mere fancy, a suggestion of others, into a really serious possibility. Might he not, after all, be the very man whom God had selected to be His Messiah? He had to confess that in some ways he was well fitted for the task. He saw what the people needed, a better and purer religion, and he knew that he could give them that. He saw that he had a great power over them, that they would follow him and obey him, and he was sure he could lead them into truer ways of life.

When he allowed himself to think thus, he was almost convinced that the suspicions of his friends must be correct, and that he really must be God's Messiah. And, then, back would come the doubts and misgivings. Most of all, he had to tremble at what he knew might very likely be his fate, if once he allowed himself to be called the Messiah. He knew that the powerful men of the nation expected a Messiah who would come with pomp and glory. They would not believe in any Messiah whose only claim to the office lay in being spiritually-minded, and who in outward showing was humble and lowly, as he would be. They would call such a man an impostor, and would first ridicule him, and then they would get angry, and very likely kill him for blasphemy.

Jesus saw that this might be his fate if he declared himself the Messiah, so he faced this hard problem, and spent all his thought and prayer in trying to decide it. He would not

discuss it openly. He would not allow his disciples even to mention the matter. It was a secret problem, which he alone must decide. The happiness and the brightness of his former days gave place now to a sober and thoughtful air, for Jesus was laboring with the gravest question of his life.

This is what he kept asking himself: "Does God intend me to be only a humble preacher, sent to prepare the way for the Messiah, or is it His intention that I myself shall be that very Messiah who must lead the nation to a truer worship and a purer life?" It did not make the problem any easier to know that in all probability his life depended upon the answer.

1. What secret problem was Jesus harboring in his mind at this time?
2. Do you think it was an easy problem to decide?
3. How would his own fate depend upon his decision?
4. How would the fate of his disciples depend upon his decision?
5. Did he allow anybody to influence him in deciding this problem?
6. Was it easy for him to be alone?
7. How did he secure for himself occasional moments of solitude?
8. How did he use these moments?
9. Who was his only counsellor during this period of doubt?
10. Did the disciples understand all that was passing through their Master's mind?
11. How long did this period of indecision last?
12. In what ways did he find himself fitted to be the Messiah?

XVII. Messengers from John.

MATTHEW XI. 2-19; LUKE VII. 18-23.

One day, right in the midst of this torturing uncertainty, there came to Jesus several messengers from his friend John. Since Jesus began his work, John had been in prison; but before that he had been preaching in Southern Palestine, just as Jesus was now preaching in Galilee. He had been arrested by Herod and cast into prison because in one of his sermons he had denounced Herod for marrying his own brother's wife.

While he lay in prison he heard the news that this man, Jesus, whom he had baptized months before in the Jordan River, was attracting great attention in Galilee by his remarkable preaching and was performing wonderful cures among the sick, and in general was creating a great deal of excitement.

At once John began to think just what Jesus' friends were beginning to think, that this man might perhaps be the Messiah. So, being very eager to know, he sent some of his disciples as messengers to Jesus, to ask him frankly, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? Or, in other words, Are you the Messiah whom we are expecting, or must we still wait?

Now in the answer which Jesus gave to these messengers we can see something of the doubt which was troubling him. He did not answer either Yes or No, because he had not yet decided. But he told the messengers to go back and give John the facts,—how the blind receive their sight and how the lame are made to walk, and how the lepers are cleansed and how the common people have good tidings preached to them, all by means of his strange power. Tell John these things, we seem to hear Jesus say, and let him decide for himself whether I, who do these things, am the Messiah or not.

So the messengers returned to their master in prison, and Jesus was left to ponder, still undecided, over his problem. The fact that John himself, his teacher and friend, in whose judgment he placed such confidence, really gave serious thought

to the suspicion that he might be the Messiah, had the effect of strengthening the possibility in Jesus' mind, and in fact may have had great weight in his final decision.

1. Where was John when he heard about Jesus?
2. How had he come to be put in such a place?
3. What question did he tell his disciples to ask Jesus?
4. Whom did he mean by the words "He that cometh"?
5. How did Jesus answer their question?
6. What does this answer indicate?
7. What do you think Jesus meant by Matthew xi. 6?
8. From what Old Testament passage is this answer quoted?
9. To what kind of children does Jesus refer in Matthew xi. 17?
10. How were the people of that generation like these children?
11. How did John's question influence Jesus himself?
12. What did Jesus think of John?

XVIII. Making Enemies.

MATTHEW IX. 10-13 and 32-34, XII. 9-14 and 22-24, XXII. 15-22;
MARK II. 15-17.

Almost everybody has enemies. It is hardly possible to be firm and decided in one's convictions without attracting the hostility of those who disagree with those convictions. So it was with Jesus. We are not to suppose that every one who heard him agreed with him and liked him. There were some who disagreed utterly with him, and who at first opposed or ridiculed all he said and did, and who later grew to hate him and fear him.

These were chiefly the men known as "Scribes" and "Pharisees." They were the better educated men, the strong, prominent class in the nation. They disagreed with Jesus when he said that the coming Messiah would be a reformer instead of a warrior. They believed he would be a great general, who would come in all the glory and splendor of military pomp, and put himself at the head of their armies, and with the help of Jehovah lead them in glorious victory against the forces of the Roman Empire.

Of course, Jesus could not believe any such thing as this. He said that the Messiah would be a lowly prophet, a religious teacher, a king of justice and goodness and love. The Scribes and Pharisees hated him for saying such things. First they mocked him and said he was a servant of the devil. Then they said he was nothing but an ignorant carpenter. Then they pretended to be shocked at his blasphemy and irreverence.

But Jesus continued to be perfectly fearless and honest in his conduct. He did not believe it was God's wish that the Sabbath, for instance, should be observed as the Scribes and Pharisees observed it. He did not think it was wrong to do good deeds on the Sabbath day, even though such deeds did have the appearance of work. But the Scribes and Pharisees said he was breaking the law when he performed his cures on the Sabbath, and hated him all the more. In fact, they took

a malicious pleasure in watching him, and in picking him up in matters where he broke the law, with the hope, doubtless, that some day they might catch him in some serious offense and have him arrested.

Of course, this hatred of theirs towards him was a great obstacle to his work, and, moreover, it aroused in him a corresponding feeling of indignation towards them for their hollow and pretentious righteousness. Several times he called them "hypocrites" and "vipers." But, in spite of it all, Jesus went steadily and fearlessly about his work. They might show him their enmity, but they could not frighten him or turn him from what he considered his duty.

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1. Who were Publicans?
 2. How were they regarded by people?
 3. What kind of people did Jesus attract to himself?
 4. What did the Pharisees say when they saw him eating with these people?
 5. Who were Scribes and Pharisees?
 6. How did Jesus reply to their criticism?
 7. Who did they mean by the son of David?
 8. Who was Beelzebub?
 9. How did the Pharisees try to overthrow him?
 10. What sly trap did they set for him in Matthew xxii. 17?
 11. How did Jesus outwit them?
 12. Can you think of any other great man who made enemies?

XIX. The Fate of John the Baptist.

MATTHEW XIV. 1-12; MARK VI. 14-29.

The last we saw of John he was in prison, where he had been put because he criticised King Herod for marrying his brother's wife. Herod did not intend to kill him, in fact he was rather afraid to. But the wife hated him with her whole heart, and was determined to put a stop to his fearless and troublesome honesty.

One day Herod had a birthday party in his palace, and one of the features of the party was a dance which his step-daughter Salome performed. It was a graceful, beautiful dance, and Herod was so pleased that he rashly promised Salome anything she should ask as a reward. So Salome asked her mother what she should choose, and her mother told her to choose the head of John the Baptist. Of course, Salome did not want such a fearful thing, but her mother was so anxious to have John beheaded that she made her daughter choose that for a reward. Herod accordingly had John beheaded in prison.

Now one day, some time after this, some one told Herod of the strange, wonderful man up in Galilee, who was exciting such comment by his preaching and his cures. Herod's guilty conscience made him at once superstitious, and he said, with a start: This man is no other than John the Baptist, whom I killed. He is risen from the dead. His ghost has come back to haunt me. But Jesus in the mean time had been told, by some loyal friends of John, of the tragic fate that had befallen their master.

It was the kind of news that would very naturally add to his fears and anxieties. He and John were very much alike in thought and deed. They were working for the same purpose. If John was deemed worthy of death, might it not follow that he himself would be the next to be sought out and slain? He was not yet ready to die. He had not settled his problem, and, until he could decide that, he must find peace and safety. So, when Jesus heard the news of John's death,

he quietly entered a boat with his disciples, and retreated to the other side of the lake, where he could be secure from intrusion and disturbance for a while.

1. What did Herod think when he heard about Jesus?
2. Who were the old prophets of Israel?
3. Why had Herod imprisoned John?
4. How did Herod feel towards John?
5. How did Herod celebrate his birthday?
6. What was his step-daughter's name, and how did she please Herod?
7. In his gratitude, what foolish promise did Herod make?
8. What did his daughter choose for her reward?
9. Who told her to choose this?
10. How did Herod feel about granting this request?
11. Who performed the burial rites for John the Baptist?
12. Where did the tragedy occur?

XX. A Fugitive.

MATTHEW XIV. 13 and 22, XV. 21-28; LUKE XIII. 31-33.

Jesus did not run away because he was afraid. His bravery in after-days proves to us that he was not afraid of death in itself. But he was not yet ready to die. He had not yet decided his problem one way or the other. He must have more time. So, in order to get this time and escape the fear and superstitious curiosity of Herod, which might lead to his arrest, Jesus felt it would be only wise to retire for a short time from public view, and go away to some distant region, where he might be unmolested until things blew over a little.

So he and his disciples planned a long walking tour to the north. First, they got into a little boat (it may have been Peter's fishing-boat), and rowed across the lake to a town called Bethsaida. As soon as they landed, people recognized Jesus, for, you remember, he had been across the lake before. They at once crowded around him to hear what he would say, and they brought him all their sick friends and neighbors, that he might heal them. He stayed in that region some days, visiting the various little towns and villages around there and doing all the good he could; and then he started on to other places.

By easy stages he soon reached the region around the great cities of Tyre and Sidon, some forty miles to the north. Here he was out of Jewish soil, in a foreign land. The people about him were not especially interested in him, because they were not Jews, but Canaanites and Greeks and Phœnicians. He cured the little daughter of a Canaanitish woman, but for the most part people paid no attention to him.

His message of the coming Messiah and his kingdom of righteousness did not appeal to their foreign minds. Jesus felt that he must use his time to better advantage, so after a little while he turned south again, and came to Bethsaida, where he cured a blind man, and then, making a great circle, he struck north a second time, to visit some villages at

Cæsarea Philippi. It was at Cæsarea Philippi that something happened which changed the whole course of his life.

1. In what danger did Jesus find himself after John's death?
2. Who warned him of this danger?
3. In his answer what term of contempt did he apply to Herod?
4. Into what region did he retire?
5. What favor did the Canaanitish woman ask of him?
6. What did he mean by his first answer?
7. What did he mean by his second answer?
8. How did the woman finally induce him to help her?
9. What kind of people lived in Tyre and Sidon?
10. Did Jesus withdraw from Galilee because he was afraid?
11. What might have happened if he had stayed there?
12. How long a journey might this have been?

XXI. Deciding the Problem.

MATTHEW XVI. 13-20; MARK VIII. 27-32; LUKE IX. 18-21.

We must imagine Jesus during these days, pondering over his great problem. Whatever he happened to be doing, that great question continually beset him, Am I the Christ whom God has sent, or am I only his forerunner? We can well imagine how the question tortured him. It was a most important question to him, and a great deal depended on how he decided it.

In the first place it meant, possibly, life or death to him. For, if he should declare himself the Christ, he knew the Pharisees, who expected their Christ to come with regal pomp, would ridicule him, call him "blasphemer," and perhaps put him to death. In the second place, the welfare of his friends depended on his decision. They were loyal, and would follow him, whatever he did. If he decided rightly, their well-being would be secured. If he decided wrongly, he would lead them into unmerited errors and disasters. He felt that their fortunes were in his hands, and this feeling made the problem ten times more serious.

Now all these arguments had been weighed by Jesus for some months, and he had at last pretty nearly come to the conclusion that he was the long-expected Messiah. Everything seemed to prove it. It looked as though that were his especial task. He had not yet told the disciples of his decision, but he took the very next opportunity of doing so. When they got to the country around Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus took his disciples aside to a quiet, shady place, and said, I have something to talk about. Who do men say I am?

Everybody was perfectly still for a moment, they were so astonished at the question. Then they began to answer bashfully: Some say you are John the Baptist come to life again. Some say you are Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the Old Testament prophets. Jesus, with a quiet little smile, asked them, But who do you say that I am? Again there came a startled

pause, which no one dared to break. But all at once Peter, the impulsive one, sprang to his feet, and cried out in a ringing voice, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God!

Jesus turned to him, and blessed him for his honesty and sympathetic insight, and from that moment the great problem of his life was decided. He was no longer Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet and preacher of strange tidings: he was thenceforth, in his own honest belief, Jesus Christ, the Messiah of God, with a Messiah's work to do.

1. Where was Cæsarea Philippi?
2. What startling question did Jesus ask his disciples?
3. To whom does he refer by the name Son of Man?
4. How did they answer the question?
5. How did he ask the question a second time?
6. Which one of the disciples answered him?
7. How do you think he acted when he gave this answer?
8. How did Jesus receive the answer?
9. What may we infer from the words "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee"?
10. What prophecy as to his own fate did Jesus at once make?
11. How could Jesus foresee this fate?
12. Why did Jesus rebuke Peter so sharply?

XXII. A Rift of Light.

MATTHEW XVII. 1-8, 14-21; MARK IX. 2-8; LUKE IX. 28-36.

As soon as Jesus had decided that he must be the Christ, there came a great change into his life. Heretofore he had been only a forerunner of the Christ, whose work had consisted in preaching to the people and preparing them for the Messiah's coming. But now that he himself was the Christ, he must add to all this work and teaching the task of actually establishing his kingdom.

There was still another change that came over him when he decided his problem. Before that day in Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus had been a happy, earnest teacher. But now that he was the Christ, the nation's deliverer, he became sober and thoughtful, as though awed by the vast responsibilities of his office. Moreover, he knew very well that he would be in danger of death at the hands of the Pharisees and Rabbis in Jerusalem, because he dared to claim that he was the Messiah of God. His mind was full of dread for the sufferings he would have to endure.

If it seems strange to us that he should have dared to take this great office in view of its dangers; we must remember that in his heart there was something stronger than fear,—his stern sense of obedience to duty. This sense of obedience, of fidelity to conscience, compelled him to make that dangerous choice, even though he knew its dangers. And we must suppose that beneath all his fears there lived a deep and radiant serenity which not even the prospect of death could destroy, but which came to him as the natural flower of his obedience to God.

One time, a few days after the decision was made, this serenity came to the surface. It was upon a hilltop, whither he had gone with three of his friends. As he sat there, thinking over his actions and his future, he might have communed thus with himself: I have decided that I am the Christ. I have taken that office because it is my plain duty. The Pharisees will

probably kill me for calling myself Christ, but they cannot rob me of my joy in doing what I know I ought to do. I have obeyed God in the face of death, and my reward lies in this gratified conscience. And then this feeling of serene satisfaction took such hold upon him that, as the story says, he was transfigured with happiness. His face shone as the sun, and God's own voice spoke to him,—This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.

We have a proverb which says that "duty performed is a rainbow in the soul." It was some such rainbow as this that filled the soul of Jesus with a rift of heavenly light. Come what might, his conscience was at rest. With a gratified conscience a man can bear almost any sorrow.

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1. Where did Jesus go six days after the scene at Cæsarea Philippi?
 2. Which disciples did he take with him?
 3. What especial relation did these disciples enjoy towards Jesus?
 4. What is it to be transfigured?
 5. How did this transfiguration show itself in Jesus?
 6. What suggestion did Peter make?
 7. What did the wonderful voice say to them?
 8. What do you think this transfiguration means?
 9. Upon what other occasion did a heavenly voice speak to him?
 10. What sad scene did they find at the foot of the mountain?
 11. Why could not the disciples cure the demoniac?
 12. Did Jesus really mean that they could remove mountains by faith?

XXIII. The First Temptation.

MATTHEW IV. 1-7.

No man can find himself suddenly gifted with a strange new power without at once being tempted to misuse that power. It was so with Jesus. After the memorable scene in Cæsarea Philippi, where he definitely took upon himself the name and the work of God's Messiah, there came to him a realization of the great power which he possessed, and which he could exercise upon the humble people about him.

His influence over them was enormous. He could make them believe just what he wanted them to believe, and he could make them do just what he wanted them to do. He saw clearly that they trusted him entirely, and that whatsoever he said was law to them. It was perfectly natural that he should at once be tempted to abuse this power; and the story of his temptations and of how he resisted them is one of the noblest stories in the Gospels.

We have it told to us in personal characters and concrete forms, as though the spirit's darkness and perplexity in which he struggled were a real wilderness and as though the troublesome voice which whispered tempting words in his heart were the voice of a real evil person. There were three ways in which this voice tempted him to abuse his power. They are called the Three Temptations.

The first temptation was that he should use his wonderful power, not so much for other people's benefit as for his own; that by it he should secure for himself riches and ease and comfort. This temptation Jesus resisted with comparative ease. He was too generous to be really attracted by it. He did not want personal wealth and ease nearly so much as he wanted to help others and have others enjoy a richer and truer and fuller measure of life through his help and through his self-denial.

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1. Where did the Spirit lead Jesus?
 2. What was the purpose of this errand?

3. How long did he fast?
4. What does the numeral 40 signify?
5. What did the tempter suggest that he do to the stones?
6. How did Jesus answer?
7. After what event did this temptation come, according to the Gospels?
8. Was it into a real wilderness that he went?
9. Was it a real Satan who spoke to him?
10. What great power had he just received?
11. For what purpose had this power been given him?
12. Of what sin would he have been guilty if he had used this power for another purpose?

XXIV. The Second Temptation.

LUKE IV. 1-13; MATTHEW XII. 38.

We have seen that it is very natural for a man to be tempted to misuse his power as soon as he is given power. Many a man has been an upright private citizen, but when he has been elected to some political office which gave him a certain amount of power, and has enabled him to influence the lives of others, he has yielded to the temptation to use this new power to his own profit, to make his own private fortune by it, or to secure his own selfish ambition by it. It is a common temptation, and perhaps we know actual people who have fallen into it.

Jesus readily resisted this temptation, but the second temptation that came to him he found much harder to resist. We have seen that his great aim in life was to help his fellow-men. We have seen that he had a great influence over the common people, and could help them wonderfully because they were ready to believe all he said. The great difficulty in his way was that the more important people in the nation, the Scribes and Priests and Pharisees, would not allow his claim of being the Christ and would not believe on him.

If only he could do something that would win them over to his side, his work of establishing a great Jewish kingdom of heaven would become very much easier and simpler. He needed their recognition. So the voice whispered to him to employ his wonderful power in doing something so marvelous that they would at once give him their recognition. Cast yourself down from the pinnacle of the temple, said the voice. You will suffer no hurt, for you are God's Christ. And this will seem so wonderful that everybody will believe on you, and recognize you as the Christ.

This was a hard temptation for Christ to overcome, for it seemed to promise him real help in doing his work. But he saw that it would not do to win recognition in such cheap ways. Good work must be done in good ways, and his recognition with the people, in order to be worth anything to him or to them,

must come through their honest appreciation of his true worth, and not through miracle or sign. So, after a severe conflict, he put down this temptation also.

1. Which is the second temptation in the Matthew story?
2. Which temptation is this in the Luke story?
3. Why did Satan take him to Jerusalem?
4. How many temples were there in the country?
5. How high was the pinnacle of the temple?
6. What did Satan say would happen if Jesus cast himself down?
7. From what Old Testament books does Satan quote in Luke iv. 10 and 11?
8. Did Jesus really believe that he could leap from this pinnacle without injury?
9. What effect would this have upon those who saw him?
10. What is a sign?
11. Why did the Pharisees want him to give them a sign?
12. Why did Jesus resist this temptation?

XXV. The Third Temptation.

MATTHEW IV. 8-11; JOHN VI. 15.

The third temptation was the hardest one of all, because it was a temptation to do nothing selfish or evil, but to do good. The voice said to him: You want to help your people, and teach them to live true and happy lives? Very well. They like you and believe in you. You have a great influence over them. If you will only consent, they are ready and anxious to take you and make you their king. You may rule them from your throne, and they will fight your battles and conquer your enemies, and make you all-powerful.

And then, as king of the people, just think of the vast amount of good you can do them. You can make good laws, and put down all corrupt practices, and remedy all the social evils and injustices, and rule them in equity and righteousness, and there shall be no more sin or cruelty or sorrow or oppression in all the land; and all your subjects will love you and bless your name.

We can easily understand how sorely this temptation appealed to Christ to use his power to make himself king, and then to inaugurate a model kingdom upon earth. But, after a long, bitter fight, he resisted this temptation also, and for this reason: he was not satisfied to do a certain amount of real good to a certain number of people.

He wanted to do all the good he possibly could to as many people as he could possibly reach. If he should allow himself to be made a king, he could do a certain amount of immediate and temporary good to a certain number of people.

But something told him, perhaps, that, if only he would go on his true way, and preach his gospel, and suffer his harsh death, and keep himself absolutely true to the pure voice of conscience in his heart, the whole world would in time learn to honor him and love him, and accept him as the type and example of true living, and that thus his influence for good

would become infinitely greater and more lasting, and would spread over all nations and live through all ages.

1. Where did Satan take him for the last temptation?
2. What did Satan show him from that place?
3. What offer did Satan make him?
4. How did Jesus reply?
5. Could Jesus really have been king if he wanted to be?
6. What good might he have done if he had allowed himself to become a king?
7. How extensive do you think his kingdom would have been?
8. Would there have been anything really sinful in yielding to this temptation?
9. Why do you suppose he resisted?
10. Why was this the hardest temptation of all?
11. How extensive is his influence to-day?
12. What is the reason of this great extent of his influence?

XXVI. Starting for Jerusalem.

MATTHEW XVII. 22-23, XX. 17-19; MARK IX. 30-37.

Just how long these various temptations lasted we are unable to say. They were probably not very definite either in time or place, but they occurred to him at odd times and places probably over and over again. Jesus nobly resisted them all, and resolved to keep himself absolutely true to the calm, insistent voice of conscience which spoke its divine promptings in his heart. Sometimes perhaps he wavered and mistrusted himself, but in the end his resolution grew stronger and grander.

He would be the Christ, he would do the work of the Christ, he would obey God with all his fidelity, even though it led him into sorrow and death. As the Christ of God, the first thing to do was to go at once to Jerusalem, and proclaim himself the Messiah of God in the nation's capital. If the people believed him and supported him, then there would be established the kingdom of the noble and true, who would live together in peace and righteousness all their days. But if the people did not believe in him, but mocked him and killed him, as he more than half expected them to do, why, he could only suffer as quietly and bravely as possible.

No matter what the people did, he must do his work faithfully and completely. Then, whatever happened, it would not be through any fault of his. So the little company went at once to Galilee, to the home in Capernaum, and after a short stay there, to make some final preparations perhaps, they started out on their journey of seventy-five or eighty miles for the great city of Jerusalem.

What deep emotions must have passed through Jesus' mind as he took his last look at the little town where he had lived,—at the gently swelling hillsides and green pastures where he had rambled and preached and prayed and spent such happy days, at the beautiful blue lake which he hardly expected to see again! How hard it must have been! But he was a ser-

vant of God. He was driven by his conscience. And, hard as it was, it would be infinitely harder for him to be false to his conscience and to turn a deaf ear to the voice of duty. So, bidding a last good-bye to lake and hill and pasture, he resolutely set his back to the little Galilean home, and started for Jerusalem.

1. Why was it necessary for Jesus to go to Jerusalem?
2. What harsh fate did he see awaiting him in that city?
3. How soon after the transfiguration did he start for Jerusalem?
4. Which route did he take?
5. Who were the Gentiles who should crucify him?
6. Why would the priests and scribes deliver him to these Gentiles?
7. Did the disciples understand what he meant when he foretold his death?
8. What dispute had the disciples been having?
9. How did Jesus settle this dispute?
10. How many times had he been to Jerusalem before?
11. Were there many people in Jerusalem who would know him?
12. At what time of the year did he plan to reach the city?

XXVII. The Journey.

MATTHEW XIX. 13-22; MARK X. 13-31; LUKE XVIII. 15-30.

Of course, the journey had to be made all the way on foot. Sometimes people traveled on camels or donkeys, but usually they walked, and Jesus and his friends were all young and vigorous, so that the prospect of the long, easy tramp was very pleasant. They decided to go a rather roundabout way.

The shortest way would be to cut right down south through the country of Samaria, stopping three or four times, for night, at little villages along the way. But this was not a favorite way, for the people of Samaria were very bitter enemies to the Jews, and would not treat them at all well. Then there was the caravan route which they could follow, running down on the west along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. But this was rather too long a way.

Instead they decided to cross the Jordan River to the east bank, and travel down through the country called Perea. This would be a delightful journey, and would give Jesus an opportunity for visiting many towns which he had never seen and for preaching to people who had never heard him. This, then, was the route they took, fording the Jordan at a point just south of the Sea of Galilee.

Many pleasant incidents occurred on the way. The people came to meet him everywhere with the utmost eagerness. He preached to them, and healed their sick, and taught them his gospel of love and goodness. Of course, all this delayed the journey considerably, but there was no especial haste. It was during this trip that Jesus was met one day by a group of women bringing their children for him to talk to and bless. We can imagine him resting under a shady tree by the roadside, while the children played around him or climbed into his arms.

It was also upon this trip that a rich young man came to him, very anxious to know how he could get into heaven, and declaring that he had obeyed all the commandments. And,

when Jesus told him to go and sell all his possessions and give the money to the poor, he shook his head and turned sadly away. He did not want to belong to the kingdom of heaven quite enough to do all that. So the time went by. Each day he preached to some new hearers or told his disciples some new parable; and each day brought him nearer and nearer to the city of Jerusalem.

1. What band of little visitors came to see him one day?
2. How were they received by the disciples?
3. Why did the disciples treat them so?
4. How did Jesus receive them?
5. Do you think Jesus was fond of little children?
6. What question did the young man ask him?
7. To what famous passage did Jesus refer him?
8. What did Jesus finally tell him to do?
9. Why did he refuse to do this?
10. Is it possible for a camel to pass through a needle's eye?
11. Do you think Jesus was prejudiced against rich people?
12. What did he consider the true use of riches?

XXVIII. Dark Forebodings.

MATTHEW XX. 17-19; LUKE XVIII. 31-34.

As they gradually drew nearer the city, Jesus could not help thinking more and more of the harsh treatment, perhaps death even, that was in store for him. We must understand that the Jews were a very pious people. They took their religion very seriously, and considered it a great sin for any one to say anything against God or the Messiah or the Bible. Such sins were called "blasphemy," and were considered crimes worthy of death.

They thought it about as sinful for a common man to claim that he was the Messiah as for him to claim that he was God himself. Such a man would be looked upon as a base impostor. He would be guilty of the worst blasphemy, because he set himself up to be the holy Messiah, the messenger of God Most High. Now Jesus honestly believed himself to be that Messiah, but he knew he could not make the proud Pharisees and Rabbis believe it. Hence he foresaw how that they would call him a liar, and a fraud and a blasphemer, and would want to kill him.

In olden days the Jews executed their criminals by stoning them to death outside the city wall. But now the country was under the laws of Rome, and the Roman law said that a criminal must be executed by crucifixion, which was, if anything, even more horrible than stoning. So this is what Jesus feared. He knew the powerful, influential men in Jerusalem would not believe him when he said he was the Messiah. He knew they would charge him with blasphemy, and have a trial, and then take him to the Roman governor and demand that he be executed. And there was no reason why the governor should not give the order to his soldiers to take him outside the city and crucify him. This is what he expected. These were his dark forebodings, and they kept growing darker, the nearer he approached the city.

Sometimes the craving for sympathy and help came over

him so strongly that he felt he must talk to some one about his fears and misgivings. So he would try to tell his disciples. But they could never understand, and simply said, Oh, no, that will never happen. Thus he had to bear his anxiety all alone. What a wonder it is that he did not give it all up, and go back to his quiet, obscure, safe life in Galilee! What a noble will he must have had to keep so steadily on in his God-given duty, even in the face of a fearful death!

1. What dark prophecy did Jesus make to his disciples concerning his own fate?
2. Did they share these gloomy expectations?
3. What do you think were their own expectations as to their master's fortune?
4. Why was Jesus prompted to make these prophecies to them?
5. Why did he wish to prepare them for his fate?
6. What are some of the things that were written through the prophets, to which he refers in the Luke version?
7. What is sympathy?
8. Do you think the disciples were sympathetic to Jesus?
9. What was it that prevented their understanding his prophecies?
10. Do you think Jesus was happy during these days?
11. Why did he go straight ahead?
12. What traits of character are most prominent in Jesus just now?

XXIX. Jericho.

MATTHEW XX. 29-34; MARK X. 46-52; LUKE XVIII. 35-43, XIX. 1-10.

Traveling along in this easy fashion, Jesus and his company finally reached the city of Jericho, very near Jerusalem. This, you remember, was the first city that Joshua and his Israelitish army conquered when they entered Canaan hundreds of years before. Ever since that time it had been inhabited by the Jews, and had ranked as one of their largest and most important cities.

As Jesus entered the gates and passed through the streets, two little incidents happened which offered him precious encouragement. A poor blind man named Bartimæus was seated at the roadside, begging alms. He heard the soft foot-falls of sandals in the dust, and cried out to know who was passing by. Some one said, Jesus of Nazareth. At once the poor fellow shouted out, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me!

They told him roughly to keep still, but he shouted the louder, Jesus, have mercy on me, until Jesus heard and stopped, and asked him what he would have. Bartimæus made his touching request, Lord, I ask that I may receive my sight. Jesus granted his request in heartfelt gratitude. Here was a blind beggar who believed on him and came to him for help, and Jesus secretly thanked him for even his poor trust and confidence.

As he walked along, with the people crowding around him more and more, he happened to glance up into a fig-tree that grew at the side of the street, and saw the figure of a man perched among the branches, and looking eagerly and intently down at him. It was a man named Zacchæus, who, being very short, had found it impossible to get a glimpse of Jesus through the crowd, and so had run on ahead and climbed a tree in order to get a good look at him. He was a man whom everybody hated and despised, because he was a tax-gatherer; but Jesus was so touched by his eagerness to see him that he

struck up a friendship with him, and called him to his side, and spent that night at his house.

Here was another man, a despised and misjudged publican, who yet believed on Jesus, and was proud of it. What an encouragement it was to him to win the confidence of at least a blind beggar and a hated tax-gatherer, if of no one else! Jesus went about his work strengthened in his determination to be faithful for the sake of the poor and the outcast, like Bartimæus and Zacchæus, if not for the benefit of the strong and the well-to-do.

1. What great city did he visit on the way to Jerusalem?
2. What occupation did Zacchæus follow?
3. Why could not Zacchæus see Jesus?
4. How did he manage to get a glimpse of him?
5. Why did the people murmur when Jesus proposed to stay at Zacchæus' house?
6. What does Bartimæus mean?
7. What was the matter with Bartimæus?
8. How did he know that Jesus was going by?
9. How did he reply when they told him to keep still?
10. Did Jesus resent being interrupted by a blind beggar?
11. Of what Old Testament incident does this remind you?
12. How far was Jerusalem from Jericho?

XXX. A Cry of Discouragement.

MATTHEW XXIII. 37-39; LUKE XIX. 41-44.

It is not likely that they stayed long in Jericho. They were in a hurry to get to Jerusalem, all the more so as it was getting near the time for the great annual Passover Feast, which the Jews observed with impressive religious ceremonies and many family gatherings. So probably the next day they set out from Jericho, up the steep, wild glen road, where there was great danger of being attacked by robbers and even savage beasts, towards the capital city.

They stopped over night in Bethany, at the house of Mary and Martha, and then the following morning quite a little company, including Jesus and his disciples and perhaps twenty or thirty friends who attached themselves to him, started out to walk the remaining five or six miles, and enter the city. Their road wound easily over a low mountain range, up gradually to the summit and down on the other side, into the little valley in the center of which stood Jerusalem.

We can well imagine how nervous Jesus grew as they trudged along this road and kept getting nearer to the top of the mountain. His heart began to beat painfully, for he felt that the most important moment of his life was coming. Here they were at last almost within sight of Jerusalem, where he must proclaim himself the Jewish Messiah, and must invite all who believed him to join with him in starting a kingdom of righteousness, and where in all probability he would be arrested by the powerful men, and tried for blasphemy, and mocked, and killed.

All these thoughts went through his mind as he toiled up the hill. And, when at last they reached the summit of the hill and could look down on the other side, there lay the great, compact city before them, with its gray wall and its red-tiled roofs, with its domes and towers and gorgeous temple glistening with marble and gold in the sun. It was such a beautiful sight, and it came so suddenly, that Jesus was completely

overcome. He seemed to feel all at once the utter hopelessness of his work. Could he ever win this great proud city to his humble gospel? Was he not foredoomed to failure? Yet he must carry out his efforts.

The sight gave him a bitter foretaste of disappointment, and it was so hard to bear that, as he gazed at the great city lying there in the sun, so proud and self-satisfied, he could not restrain the tears, because he knew how obstinate it was going to be, how it was going to turn away from his message, which would have secured it strength and security and peace. It is no wonder that he wept at the sight and thought. The wonder is that in spite of the discouragement he kept on.

1. What village did Jesus stop at on his way to Jerusalem?
2. What people did he know in this village?
3. What natural feature of the landscape lay between this village and Jerusalem?
4. At what point in the road might the traveler get his first view of the city?
5. How did this first sight affect Jesus?
6. Of what other incident in his life might he have been thinking?
7. Was his prophecy ever fulfilled?
8. Could Jesus have really averted the ruin of the city?
9. As he wept over the city, was he thinking of himself or of them?
10. How many people were with Jesus?
11. What great event was about to begin in the city?
12. Why did he come to Jerusalem at just this time?

XXXI. Fulfilling the Prophecy.

MATTHEW XXI. 1-11; MARK XI. 1-10; LUKE XIX. 29-40.

In the Old Testament book of Zechariah there is a prophecy which declares that, when the Messiah should come into Jerusalem, people might know him because he would be a lowly, humble man, and would be riding upon a little ass's colt. It was not a very definite prophecy, because there were a great many lowly, humble men who continually rode into Jerusalem upon asses or upon colts. That was one of the commonest methods of traveling at the time. So people did not pay much attention to the prophecy. Besides, they did not expect a lowly, humble Messiah: they looked for a glorious, powerful king.

But Jesus was very familiar with this Old Testament prophecy, as he was with all the sacred writings, and was determined, when he entered Jerusalem, to do it in the way the prophecy described, riding upon a little colt. It would perhaps be a tacit way of proclaiming himself the man of whom the prophecy was written. So, when they started on for the city, he sent two disciples ahead to the village of Bethphage, half-way down the mountain, with instructions to find a colt there and have him ready.

Sure enough, when he and the rest of his friends came to Bethphage, there were the two disciples holding a sturdy little colt, upon which they had laid their mantles to make a sort of saddle. Jesus got upon the strong little beast, and went on his way, while all his friends walked eagerly along beside him, singing and talking in a very excited manner. They soon met another company of friends, who had heard that Jesus was coming, and had set out from the city to meet him. These new-comers joined the throng, so that it numbered perhaps as many as a hundred men, women, and children, and they all swept joyously along the road, with Jesus riding ahead, into the city.

In order to show their joy at his coming and in order to

let every one know that this humble man was their Messiah, they cut down palm branches and strewed them, with flowers and leaves and even their own garments, upon the dusty road, so that his colt might walk upon them. And they themselves waved their palms, and shouted, "Hosanna! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" And the children sang and danced about him, and in this simple, joyous fashion Jesus fulfilled the prophecy, and entered the great city of his fathers as the Messiah, sent to deliver his people from sin.

1. Where is the village of Bethphage?
2. On what errand did Jesus send two disciples into this village?
3. How were they to answer, if anybody objected?
4. How did they prepare these animals for him to ride upon?
5. How did they show their joy?
6. What does Hosanna mean?
7. From what Old Testament prophecy did Jesus model this action?
8. What inference did he wish people to draw from this action?
9. Did he create much of a sensation?
10. What did the Pharisees say to him?
11. How did Jesus reply?
12. What name is given to the Sunday which commemorates this event?

XXXII. A Busy Week.

MATTHEW XXI. 12-17, 23-32; MARK XI. 11, 15-19; LUKE XIX. 45-48.

Jerusalem was so crowded that Jesus and his friends could find no place to lodge. So he decided to live in Bethany, and come to the city every morning to do his work. After his triumphal entry he went straight to the beautiful temple on Mt. Zion. This was the place where men worshiped God, and Jesus, as the Messiah of God, felt that he had charge of His temple and religion. So he went there at once, as to his headquarters.

When he reached it, he saw a sight that filled him with anger. The temple was surrounded by broad marble porticoes or courts. People were continually passing through these courts to make a short cut, or were resting and sleeping in the cool shade; and some were even selling doves and incense and other small wares among the columns. They had no more idea of the sacredness of the place than to turn it into a lounging place and a general bazaar.

It made Jesus just as indignant at it would make us to see a man selling lemonade from the steps of our church. He got a scourge of small knotted cords, and with flashing eyes drove these loungers and venders out of the courts, reminding them that the house of God was a house of prayer, not a den of thieves and robbers. This action of his excited the hostility of the Priests and Rabbis, who resented such an implication of proprietorship and authority from a humble peasant. They asked him "by what authority" he did these things, and they set themselves to work in the craftiest ways to entrap Jesus into saying something blasphemous or treasonous, so that they might ruin him.

They knew that, if they could catch him saying anything disparaging to their religion or their law, the people would turn from him as from a leper; and, if only they might catch him saying something against Rome, it would be a simple matter to have him arrested by the Roman officers for treason.

So hardly a day went by but what some group of cunning old Jews approached him with bland words and fair exterior, to put their embarrassing questions to him.

In the incident of the tribute money, and the woman taken in sin, and in the question regarding the great commandment, and concerning marriage in heaven, we have a few samples of the wiles and plots by means of which they attempted to ensnare Jesus. Jesus, on the other hand, foils every plot and parries every thrust with such quick insight and ready tact that we listen to his retorts in wonder and delight. In this way a busy week went by. His days were spent in the city, in the temple, on the streets, preaching and talking to the people who heard him gladly. His nights were spent peacefully with his loving friends in Bethany.

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1. Where did Jesus go first after entering Jerusalem?
 2. What did he see there that made him very angry?
 3. Why did these people gather in just that place?
 4. What did Jesus do to them?
 5. How did the Pharisees feel when they saw this action?
 6. What embarrassing question did the Pharisees ask him?
 7. Suppose Jesus had answered their question, what charge would they have brought against him?
 8. What embarrassing question did he ask them in turn?
 9. Why did they not dare to answer this question?
 10. Why were the Pharisees so anxious to destroy him?
 11. To whom did the two sons in the parable correspond?
 12. Where did Jesus spend his nights?

XXXIII. The Last Meal Together.

MATTHEW XXVI. 1-5, 14-30; MARK XIV. 1-2, 10-26; LUKE XXII. 1-23.

As the days went by, Jesus could not help seeing that the feeling of the Scribes and Pharisees was growing more and more hostile towards him. The tone of sarcasm and mockery with which they had at first met him had grown into deep and genuine hatred. Rumors came to his ears of plans and conspiracies to entrap him, and in a dozen different ways he was led to see that the end was near, and that the bitter feeling of his enemies must soon break out into violent action. This he had more than half expected all along, but the present reality was none the less terrifying in spite of his being forewarned.

As the great Passover Week drew to its close, something seemed to tell Jesus that he had not much longer to live. On Thursday night it was the custom for all good Jews to eat their annual Passover Supper. Jesus felt that this supper would be the last meal he and his disciples would ever eat together. Events proved that his feeling was only too true. He decided to make it a sort of a farewell occasion to his friends. This Passover Supper, which came on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, was the central feature of the whole celebration, and was not so unlike our Thanksgiving dinner.

On that evening the people all gathered by families or by parties of eight or ten, each in a separate room, and there they ate this sacred meal. They always had bitter herbs and unleavened bread and a lamb, just as we always have turkey and cranberry sauce for Thanksgiving. The custom was that they must eat everything up. Jesus and his friends had their supper together in an upper chamber which some one lent them. It was a solemn company, for Jesus felt that it was the last he should see of them. He knew that his enemies were only waiting for an excuse to arrest him, so as to convict him of blasphemy and condemn him to death. He also knew

from certain suspicious actions that one of his own disciples, Judas, was planning to help the Pharisees to arrest him.

We cannot believe Judas was treacherous in his design. He was rather working from the notion that by placing his master in mortal peril he should force him to call upon divine aid, and thus prove conclusively, in the eyes of the whole nation, that he was the divine Messiah. Jesus must have suspected his purpose, for, while they were sitting at the table, he said, with a suddenness that was startling, "One of you shall betray me."

The words cast a gloom on the company. They realized for the first time that Jesus was in desperate danger, and that this very meal might be their last farewell to him. The supper ended in sadness. They sang a hymn together, and then went out into the cool night, to the Garden of Gethsemane.

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1. Why were the Pharisees unwilling to take Jesus during the feast?
 2. Which one of the twelve disciples proposed to betray him to them?
 3. How did Jesus tell his disciples to find the chamber where they might eat their Passover Feast?
 4. What did they have to do to make ready the Passover?
 5. What did they have to eat at this meal?
 6. On what day of the week was it eaten?
 7. At what time of day?
 8. What startling thing did Jesus tell them as they were eating?
 9. How did they answer?
 10. How did he say good-bye to them?
 11. In what way does the Christian Church commemorate this meal?
 12. Where did they go after the meal was finished?

XXXIV. The Darkest Hour.

MATTHEW XXVI. 36-56; MARK XIV. 32-50.

As Jesus and his disciples left the room where they had eaten their Passover Supper, Judas was missing. He had gone to meet the officers of the High Priest and lead them to Jesus. It became at once evident to Jesus that the time had come for him to face his enemies, and to suffer at their hands whatever torment they might see fit to inflict.

It was very natural that this prospect should arouse in him a perfect agony of dread. Even the coolest and most valiant heart must tremble a little in the presence of an awful death. Jesus was a peaceful man. He did not have the hardened nerves of a soldier. He had lived a gentle, quiet life, and the thought of being arrested and brutally handled and killed filled him almost with panic.

All his strong love of life and peace and comfort came to the surface, and urged him to escape while yet there was time. There might still be an hour or so before Judas reached the garden with the officers. Why should he not quietly slip off to Bethany or disappear among the wild ravines of the wilderness? He could wait there until the trouble blew over. People would soon forget, and then he would be safe again. Life was just as sweet to him as it is to us, and his fear of physical pain was just as keen as ours. So this instinct to save himself came uppermost.

But there was another instinct in his noble mind that was just as strong, and even stronger. It was the instinct of fidelity to his ideal, of obedience to his sense of duty. God wanted him to be his Christ. If God chose to have his Christ suffer and die, it was his duty to suffer and die. It was a hard battle that was fought there in the darkness of Gethsemane, the eternal battle between selfish inclination and the sense of duty.

We do not think any the less of Jesus for passing through the terror and weakness of that last dark hour. It just shows how much it cost him to keep himself true to God's will. If

the struggle had been easier, the victory would not have been so glorious. As he kneels there beside a huge stone in the garden, praying to God, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt," he shows us how noble and true in spite of all human weaknesses a man can be.

So he overcame his last weakness and hushed his last fear, and gave himself once more, and for the last time, completely over to the service of God. The next moment, when Judas appeared with a band of soldiers and pointed out Jesus by kissing him, he went quietly with them, in perfect calmness and serenity.

1. Who were the two sons of Zebedee?
2. Why did he begin to be exceeding sorrowful?
3. What prayer did he make to his Heavenly Father in the garden?
4. What were the disciples doing when he came back to them?
5. Of whom was he speaking when he said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak"?
6. How many times did he go into the garden to pray?
7. Who did Judas bring with him to arrest Christ?
8. How did Judas identify Christ?
9. Which one of the disciples began to offer resistance?
10. What did the disciples do when he was arrested?
11. What did Jesus mean when he prayed, "Let this cup pass from me"?
12. What day of the week was this?

XXXV. The End.

MATTHEW XXVI. 57-68, XXVII. 1-2, 11-61.

Jesus was arrested at about ten o'clock, perhaps, on a Thursday night. The disciples all fled as soon as the soldiers appeared, fearing lest they also be arrested with him. He was taken at once to the house of the High Priest, Caiaphas, and was put up for trial. By his own admission he was convicted of calling himself the Messiah, and was found guilty of blasphemy. The next thing was to get him condemned to death, and, to do this, it was necessary to apply to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate.

Very early in the morning Jesus was taken, having first been scourged and mocked in the house of Caiaphas, through the narrow streets to the fortress where the governor lived. Pilate was not at all a bad man. He had a keen sense of justice, and he was entirely unprejudiced. When he cross-examined Jesus, he found no fault whatever in him except that he claimed to be the Messiah of the Jews. This did not strike Pilate as being such a great offense; the man might have been a mild lunatic at the most, but hardly deserving of death.

So Pilate, thinking to release him, went out on the portico that looked down into the street, and spoke to the crowd. He said, I find no guilt in this man. I see no cause for killing him. I will give orders that he be whipped, and then I will release him. But the people shouted angrily back: Crucify him! Crucify him! Still Pilate stuck to his intention. He had Jesus whipped, and a crown of thorny brambles forced upon his head, and in that pitiable condition Pilate led him out on the portico, and showed him to the people, and said: See, here is the man. I have had him scourged and crowned with thorns. Is not that punishment enough? See how he has suffered! Will you not let me release him now? But the people shouted still more furiously: Crucify him! Crucify him!

And some of the influential men warned Pilate that, if he

did not crucify him, it would stir up a sedition, and the Roman emperor might think him incapable of handling the province. So at last, to save his own position, Pilate washed his hands of the whole affair, and said: Oh, very well, do as you please with him. His blood is not on my hands. The soldiers made a great rough cross from beams of wood, and the whole crowd poured out of the city to the place of execution, called Golgotha.

There they nailed their victim upon the cross, and fixed it upright by planting the end in the ground. There Jesus hung for a time, until his weak and outworn body could endure the pain no longer. Then with a despairing cry to God, who appeared to have utterly forgotten him, he died. Loving friends came and took the shattered body down, and laid it tenderly in a grave. No man can tell where that grave is.

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1. Where was Jesus first taken?
 2. Which of the disciples stealthily followed Jesus?
 3. What accusation did they find against Jesus?
 4. Where did they take him the first thing in the morning?
 5. Why was this necessary?
 6. In what ways did Pilate endeavor to save his life?
 7. Why did Pilate finally consent to his death?
 8. In what cruel way did they mock him?
 9. Who did they get to help him carry out his cross?
 10. How long did Jesus live?
 11. What were his last words?
 12. Who buried him, and why was he buried so quickly?

XXXVI. Conclusion.

With the last tragic scene the story of Jesus' life comes to a triumphant and heroic close. If we could go on with the story of the disciples and the early Christian Church, we would see how great was the influence of Jesus' life upon men. As we look back through the lessons we have studied, there stands out prominently and clearly a life faithful to the duty it felt laid upon itself.

Jesus' duty was a very high and beautiful one. It was his strength, as he himself testified: My meat is to do the will of God. He felt that God had sent him to do and to say certain things, and, whatever else might happen to him, he must do and say those things. It was not always, as we have seen, the easiest and safest way for him personally, but it was the only way his strong and steadfast soul could take, because it was the duty which the will of his Father had laid upon him.

This duty was not like a hard task that he did because he was forced to do it, but was done willingly and gladly, because he loved and wanted to help his people. And so, when his duty grew into the thought that he was the Messiah, he undertook that work as the will of God, and in love and helpfulness to men, though it was full of dangers for him. This faithful and loving obedience to duty is what our lessons have principally taught us.

We may ask, Was Jesus the Messiah? If we think of the Messiah as the Jews did, as a prince and warrior who was to conquer their enemies and rule gloriously, then Jesus was not the Messiah. Because he did none of these things, because he did not try to do so or teach so, the Jews would not accept him. So Jesus was not the Messiah according to Jewish belief. He had a different idea of the Messiah. He believed in the Messiah of righteousness, who came to set up the kingdom of righteousness in the lives of men. So, as the Messiah, he tried to make his people see that the kingdom of God was

to be established by their being good, just, merciful, pure, and true.

Though he was unsuccessful in leading them to take his view, nevertheless, since his death, men have seen that the kingdom of God can be brought into the world only in that way, and are trying all the time to do so. If we take Jesus' view of the Messiah, as one who in God's good time was sent by Him to show what His kingdom is, and to lead men to it, then we may call Jesus the Messiah.

We have now come to the end of our lessons, and have seen how noble, brave, and unselfish a man can be. And we have in our hearts, always, the companionship of this strong, faithful Jesus of Nazareth to help us, and teach us how to become so.

1. What do you consider the most prominent trait in Christ's character?
2. Do you think he was on the whole a happy man, or was he, as he has been called, a "man of sorrows"?
3. What new thing did he teach the world about God?
4. Of what tender bond with God was he supremely conscious?
5. Does he anywhere claim that he is the only man who enjoys this bond with God?
6. In what relationship with each other does he teach men to live?
7. Do you think he was right in claiming that he was the Christ of God?
8. Have the Jews ever agreed that his claim was a correct one?
9. How old might he have been when he died?
10. What beautiful legend arose concerning him after his crucifixion?
11. In what way does this legend represent the truth?
12. What Sunday in the year commemorates this event?

HELPS FOR TEACHERS



HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

(The information below gives answers to the questions in each lesson.)

I. Birth.

1. Judea. 2. Turkey. 3. Galilee. Judea. 4. Jerusalem. 5. Emperor of Rome, of which empire Judea was a colony, or province. 6. To be taxed, or enrolled, in his ancestral home.

7. There was no room in the inn. This does not necessarily mean that they sought quarters in a separate stable building. The inn, like the ordinary peasant's home, was probably a combination dwelling-house and stable, a rectangular, one-roomed structure with mud walls and thatched roof, one-half of which was floored at a height of two or three feet above the ground. The family lived and slept on the floored part. The cattle occupied the unfloored part. Along the edge of the floor was fixed the trough or manger, out of which the cattle ate the fodder. "No room in the inn" means simply that the floored space was crowded with sleeping forms, and so Joseph and Mary stepped down into the unfloored part, and slept among the cattle. When the child was born, the most natural place to lay him was in the manger, which, filled with straw, made a very convenient little bed.

8. Apparently 1909 years ago, as we date our time from his birth. But it is necessary to make a slight correction. We are told explicitly in the Matthew birth-stories that Jesus was born while Herod the Great was still alive. We know also that Herod died in March or April of the year B.C. 4. Jesus, then, must have been born before this date, and in fact the year which scholars have very generally accepted as the year of his birth is B.C. 6. The correct answer to our question is, therefore, about 1915 years ago.

9. Christmas. The day is really the vestige of an old Teutonic fete season, known as Yuletide. In the fourth cen-

tury it was adopted as the day of Christ's birth by the Western Church.

10. The shepherds from the fields. The old legend which declares that two of the disciples, Thaddeus and Simon the Zealot, were members of this group of shepherds, is interesting and beautiful, but absolutely without foundation.

11. Through the angel and the multitude of the heavenly host.

12. On foot, sometimes riding on their tough little donkeys. Camels were sometimes used, but only for long journeys which would necessitate crossing some desert region.

Picture, *The Arrival of the Shepherds*, by Lerolle; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 11.) Pictures of the nativity almost invariably contain the ox and the ass, referring to Isaiah i. 3: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib." Wilde's Bible Pictures, which will be suggested for use with these lessons, may be obtained of W. A. Wilde Publishing Company, 120 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.

II. Bad News.

1. **Magi**, a Greek word meaning wise men. Their wisdom lay in their familiarity with the astrology of their time, by which they sought to forecast the future, not only for their own nation, but for all nations. The Gospels do not tell us how many magi there were. One tradition fixes the number at twelve. The tradition which has gained favor with Western Christianity declares there were but three, and that their names were Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthasar. Another tradition states that each was a king in his own country. The Venerable Bede declares that it was Melchior, old, wise, with long hair and beard, who offered the gold as symbol of Christ's royalty, Gaspar, a young man, with rosy, beardless face, who offered the frankincense to testify that Christ was worthy of men's adoration, while Balthasar, of dusky countenance, with beard newly grown, brought the myrrh as token of the coming tragedy of Christ's life.

A little story by Henry Van Dyke, entitled *The Other Wise Man*, would be a good story to tell at this place.

2. From the east, a rather indefinite answer. Magi means, technically, a member of the priestly class of Persia. An old tradition states that they came from Arabia, which was not east, but south of Judea. Another tradition declares that each came from a different country. (See Ben Hur.)

3. Naturally to Herod the king, who assembled his councillors and learned from them the prophecies relating to the Messiah's birth. (Micah v. 2.)

4. Verse 8. Herod pretended that he wished to go and worship the new-born king also, whereas he really wished to kill him. His intention was to employ the magi to locate the child, so that he might find him and put him to death without delay.

5. By the moving star, which rested over the house. The astronomer Kepler has computed that a very noticeable conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn took place three times in the year B.C. 7, and the suggestion has been made that this is what the wise men saw. But the data are too indefinite to allow of any certainty in the matter.

6. Frankincense and myrrh are both resinous gums obtained by slitting the bark of certain trees, from which the gum exudes. (Compare our "spruce gum.") Frankincense is white, and is used as an incense; that is, burnt in a censer to make an agreeable odor. Myrrh is yellow and bitter to the taste, and was used as a tonic and stimulant. It was frequently powdered and mixed with wine to add more flavor. Both frankincense and myrrh were considered great luxuries, and both are marketed in large quantities to-day.

7. They were warned in a dream of Herod's real intention towards Jesus, and went home another way.

8. By a dream.

9. To Egypt, where he would be out of Herod's jurisdiction.

10. He naturally wished to bequeath his throne to some heir of his own house. Herod's jealousy was one of his strongest and saddest traits. He killed three of his own sons, his favorite wife, and his mother-in-law in fits of jealous rage.

11. About six miles south-west.

12. Herod ruled thirty-seven years. The earlier years of his reign were glorious and wise. He was a great builder and organizer. He thoroughly understood his people, and tried at first to be a good king. The later years of his life were marred by domestic quarrels and tragedies, which so embittered him that he died virtually insane with disappointment and jealousy.

Picture, Adoration of the Magi, by J. von Schrandolph. (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 469.) Also, Joseph's Dream, by Daniele Crespi. (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 24.)

III. A Hurried Flight.

1. To escape all possibility of observation.

2. Herod had charged the wise men to return to him and tell him where the young child was, that he might go and worship him. Their failure to do so indicated to Herod's guilty conscience that they suspected his real design, and held his instructions in contempt. Thus Herod felt himself "mocked."

3. He became "exceeding wroth." 4. He charged them with the so-called "slaughter of the innocents." 5. He thus hoped to kill the new-born king of the Jews.

6. Two years and under. This passage is often cited in attempts to fix the date of Christ's birth. Herod died in the spring of 4 B.C. Some months before his death he gave orders to kill all children of two years and under, in the hope of killing Jesus. In other words, Herod was sure that Jesus must be in the number of those infants who were born between the years 4 and 6 B.C.

7. It is claimed that, since Bethlehem was a town of not more than about a thousand inhabitants, there would not have been but twelve or fifteen children of that age.

8. The distance is about 150 miles. Traveling easily, as people did in those days, this journey might have taken about a fortnight.

9. The camel, because of his speed and endurance. Certain breeds of camels can go from sixteen to forty days without water.

10. In the Old Testament mention is made of the hart, or antelope, the wild ass, the lion, the bear, and the wolf.

11. Because it ran along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The Sea Road is one of the oldest and most famous highways in the world. Connecting, as it does, those two great "cradles of the human race," the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile, the road has been in existence for thousands of years, and is in constant use to-day.

Verse 14 seems to imply that Joseph and Mary set out upon their long journey to Egypt with remarkable ease and celerity. Their preparations consisted of arising and taking the young child. This is characteristic of the times and the manner of living. They were an out-of-door people, living near to nature, unhampered by household necessities and accessories. "Home" was wherever they happened to be. It is no harder for such people to travel than to stay at home. "He arose, and took the young child and his mother, and departed": that, literally, was almost all there was to it.

12. Many such stories were told, some of which may be found in Cowper's Apocryphal Gospels, especially the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, chapters xvii. to xxv. The story of the palm-tree which bent over forms the subject of one of Correggio's most beautiful paintings, the *Madonna della Scodella*. One thing in the apocryphal stories of the incidents on the way is worth noting: they are all pervaded by an atmosphere of gentleness and love. Whether Jesus encounters dragons, lions, robbers, or palm-trees, violence and hatred and wrath turn at once to helpfulness and peace and gentleness at his approach. This element of course betrays merely that attitude of mind of the old story-tellers and story-makers towards Jesus, but it is a good attitude, and well worth emphasizing.

Picture, *The Flight into Egypt*, by Plockhurst; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 27). Also, *Repose in Egypt*, by Anthony Van Dyck; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 432.)

IV. Growing Up.

1. One of his sons, Archelaus. Two other sons, Herod Antipas and Philip, became tetrarchs of Galilee, and Perea and the north-eastern districts, respectively.

2. Nazareth, in Galilee, the family home.

3. Four brothers and at least two sisters. The statement that Joseph was an elderly man, who had at least six children by a former wife, is based not only upon persistent apocryphal legends, but upon the apparent fact that he died some time during Jesus' youth, between his first visit to the Passover and his baptism by John. His death while Jesus was yet a boy lends a shadow of probability to the theory that he was an elderly man. See also Matthew xiii. 53-56, where the people strive to identify Jesus by reminding themselves that he is a brother to James and Joseph and Simon and Judas. These brothers and sisters are apparently better known than Jesus himself. May this not argue that they were older than Jesus? If these brethren and sisters were older than Jesus, Mary must have been a second wife, for Jesus was her first-born.

4. James, Joseph, Simon, Judas.

5. See Matthew xi. 16, 17, where Jesus "likens this generation" to the children playing their games in the square or market-place of the town. The words may have been prompted by his observation of the children about him. They may have been prompted just as well by his memories of his own childhood.

6. "We piped unto you, and ye did not dance." The words suggest the whole picture: some of the players walking down the street pretending to blow upon pipes, while the others came dancing and capering after, thus imitating the wedding procession as it passed through the village streets. Similarly, "We wailed, and ye did not mourn." It is evident, by the way, that children were sometimes sulky and "wouldn't play" in Christ's time, just as much as in ours. In the entire dearth of available data relating to this boyhood period of Christ's life we have to form our conception of his childhood from what we know of child-life in general in that land. Jewish

children were brought up to render very prompt and strict obedience to their parents, and yet they were surrounded with love. They were not allowed to waste their time in idleness, and yet they were universally happy and light-hearted. The Apocryphal Gospels give us one or two hints, such as they are, of the games and pleasures in which Jesus took part, as a small boy.

7. In the synagogue. There were no school buildings, but each town had its synagogue, which served for a school on week-days and for a church on the Sabbath.

8. Education began at the age of six or seven, and consisted of memorizing passages from the law books of the Old Testament. Deuteronomy vi. verses 4 and 5, was perhaps the first passage taught the child. They then turned to Leviticus and Numbers until the first nine chapters of Leviticus and the first ten chapters of Numbers were committed to memory. Probably the child was also taught to read and write. At the age of ten the pupil was taught passages from the Mishna. Ordinary education ceased at the age of twelve or thirteen. Pupils who themselves had planned to become teachers went to Jerusalem at the age of fifteen to eighteen to attend the advanced rabbinical schools in that city. Girls were not taught the same subjects as boys. The boy's education was wholly in the Law, intended to teach him to fear God and be an upright citizen. The girl's education was a series of polite accomplishments, to talk Greek and play the guitar, to sew and dance.

At school they used no text-books, such things of course being unknown. Their instruction was given them *viva voce*. A Jewish school-room was therefore a perfect babel.

9. Jesus' parents probably belonged to the peasant class, and these dwelt in very crude little huts. They were built of saplings stuck upright in the ground to form the walls. The saplings were wattled, or intertwined with twigs, the whole then plastered thickly with mud, which dried and hardened into a solid wall almost a foot thick. The roof was a coarse thatch of twigs and mud. There was no window and but one door. A hard rain would wash a house away. (Matthew

vii. 26.) Houses were used only as a place to sleep and a place to cook. People lived out of doors all the time.

10. Peasant boys wore a long, sleeveless shirt, reaching almost to the knees, and girded at the waist with a cord or sash. This was all, with the possible addition of a pair of sandals, to protect the feet from sharp stones, and a kerchief wrapped about the head and neck.

11. See John vi. 9. The little lad had brought his lunch. The two fishes, about as large as herrings, were caught in the Lake of Gennesaret, and smoked or salted. The five loaves were made of barley pounded into a dark, coarse flour, mixed with water, and fried into the form and size of a pancake. These two articles, barley and fishes, were the staples. There might be one or two luxuries in the shape of figs or dates, or a little milk or even eggs.

12. It was customary for the son to go into the trade of his father. All boys had to learn some trade, be they rich or poor. If we may credit the Luke account of Jesus' visit to the Passover at the age of twelve (and there is every reason for crediting it, for all Jewish boys were taken to their first Passover at about that age), it is evident that even as a boy he was thoughtful, and deeply interested in what he learnt at school of the great Law of his people. It is necessary to imagine him deeply attached to his old father, and enjoying a strong, sympathetic intimacy with him. His constant use of the term "Father," as describing God's relations to men and women, seems to indicate that he had in mind a very precious experience with his own earthly father. With his brethren and sisters it is to be feared that he had not much in common. This is not strange, when we remember the disparity in age. One or two incidents in his later life seem to argue that they did not understand him and had little sympathy with him.

Picture, *Divine Apprentice*, by Demont Breton; (Brown's Bible Pictures, No. 1669.) George P. Brown & Co., Beverly, Mass. Also, *Infancy of Christ*, by Hofmann; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 31.)

V. The Great Passover Feast.

1. About 75 miles, which would take three or four days to accomplish.

2. On foot. Little companies of sixty or seventy people would be formed for the sake of protection and companionship, which would proceed by easy stages from the various towns and villages to Jerusalem, spending the night in wayside hamlets or even in the open fields.

3. Every dwelling and inn was crowded to its utmost capacity, and countless little booths, or huts, were erected outside the walls for the accommodation of guests. It is estimated that during the week of the feast the population of Jerusalem might have numbered three or four million souls. Entertainment was an easy matter, for each visitor brought his own food to last the whole time, and one could always sleep on the bare ground under the stars, if necessary. Attendance at the Passover was required of every male Jew who was ceremonially undefiled and who lived within fifteen miles of Jerusalem. In addition to these, hundreds of pious Jews, men and women, came each year from outlying districts and even from remote parts of the Roman Empire. Passover week was always much dreaded by the Roman authorities in Jerusalem, because in this vast crowd, with its sense of nationality inflamed and its religious feelings aroused to a feverish pitch, there was always great danger of political outbreaks and disturbances.

4. The temple upon Mount Zion, the highest point of land within the city walls. This was a beautiful marble structure, with extensive courts and colonnades and a roof covered with thin sheets of gold.

5. One day's journey. The company to which they belonged had reassembled at the appointed time and had started homeward. Joseph and Mary knew that Jesus had been told the place of meeting and the hour of departure, and, though they did not see him, they thought naturally that he was somewhere in the company with some playmates or companions. At the end of the first day's march, when he failed to appear

for the evening meal, they missed him, and a thorough search of the whole company revealed the fact that he was not with them. They immediately retraced their steps to Jerusalem.

6. Three days, or at least they appear to have found him on the third day.

7. In a quiet corner of the great court of the temple. This great court of the temple was the center of the religious and intellectual life of the city. It corresponded on a humble scale to the Forum at Rome. Here might be seen long-bearded Rabbis, in couples or groups, seated in some quiet corner behind a massive column, surrounded by a circle of young disciples, and all deeply intent upon some minute discussion of legal interpretation. Here also were money-changers and venders of doves, displaying their wares for the convenience of those who desired to make an offering upon the altar. Here were busy pedestrians seeking a short cut to their destination through the great court. Every bit of news, every item of interest or importance, whether political, religious, or intellectual, was first told and discussed in the great Court of the Gentiles. The spot was church, university, and parliament all rolled into one.

8. He had joined one of the groups seated about a pair of solemn and famous Rabbis, and was listening to their words, and asking questions, and taking part in the discussion. All marveled at the quick wit and acute intelligence of this twelve-year-old Galilean boy. As we have seen, all Jewish boys made their first visit to the Passover in Jerusalem at about this age, twelve or thirteen. It was an event of considerable importance in the boy's life, for it was supposed to mark the end of his education and the beginning of his moral maturity and moral responsibility. Henceforth he was morally of age. He might no longer plead the excuse of childish ignorance, but must stand upon his own feet and claim his own credit or take his own blame. The age of maturity, both moral and physical, is much earlier in Oriental people than with us.

9. Verse 48. Mary was naturally provoked, not only that he had given them such a fright by failing to join the company

upon the return to Nazareth, but that her fright was shown to be entirely needless by finding that he was safe and well.

10. Boy-like, he evaded the main question, and expressed surprise that they should have searched the city for him, when, had they taken a little thought of his natural interests, they might have guessed at once that he would be in but one place, the temple court, listening to a religious discussion.

11. To his Heavenly Father. One of the most striking traits in the boy Jesus was his thoughtfulness. His interest in religious matters was exceptionally deep, and, judging from this hint of his disputing with the doctors in the temple court, this trait appeared in him at an early age.

12. Israel's escape from Egyptian bondage, when the angel of Death "passed over" every Israelitish home, and smote the first-born of the households of Egypt. As a result of this terrible visitation, Pharaoh had not only allowed, but had urged, the departure of the Israelites from his realm. (Exodus xii.)

Picture, Christ's First View of Jerusalem, by Mengelberg; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 34.) Also, Finding Christ in the Temple, by Holman Hunt; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 35.)

VI. The Fearless Preacher.

1. John, commonly called John the Baptist, to distinguish him from John the Evangelist, who was one of Christ's disciples. That John created great excitement by his preaching in Judea is clear from what the Jewish historian Josephus says of him. In many ways his must have been a strong and lovable personality, entirely fearless, straightforward, and direct. His execution by Herod aroused intense indignation. His influence upon Christ was probably very great indeed, for he was the first man whom Christ heard openly saying and preaching the things which Christ himself had gradually thought out in the seclusion of his carpenter-shop,—that repentance and moral reformation were essential to membership in the coming kingdom which the Messiah would estab-

lish. To see his countrymen laying their hopes of membership in the kingdom upon their descent from Abraham and, in their ignorance, wholly neglecting the moral condition, which was just as essential, was too much for John's generous spirit. He must preach his word of warning and preparation while yet there was time. This sense of the urgency of his work was wholly inherited by Jesus.

2. Because in his utter disregard for consequences he never paused to humor people's prejudices or spare their feelings, but spoke the naked truth of his mind. He stigmatized the Pharisees and Sadducees, powerful men of the nation, as "ye offspring of vipers." He openly condemned King Herod's marriage, thereby incurring the hatred and fear of Herodias, who had him beheaded.

3. Luke i. 80. In the deserts; that is, in the wild and sparsely inhabited region just south of Jerusalem. The map shows three "wildernesses" south of Jerusalem, those of Tekoa, Jeruel, and Maon. They are irregular little regions, five or ten miles in length and three to eight miles wide. We are not to infer that John was a hermit. He was simply out of humor with the prevailing life of the times, and preferred to live in the seclusion of one of the remoter districts.

4. The raiment of camel's hair and the leathern girdle was the usual garb of the Old Testament prophets, which John may have purposely adopted. Camel's hair was woven into tent-cloth and into a coarse fabric which peasants and poor people used for clothing. John's raiment corresponds with the "linsey-woolsey" garments of our own colonial times. Locusts and wild honey was a common diet with the very poor peasants who lived on the borders of just such desert regions. Locusts are eaten to this day by the wandering Bedouins of Arabia. John's food and dress marked him as belonging to the poorer peasant class of the southern wilderness.

5. Repent, and bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. The notion prevailed among the Jews that they would be taken into the Messiah's kingdom simply by virtue of their being Jews. "We have Abraham to our father" was their boast. "We are sure of a membership in the kingdom be-

cause of our descent from him." This idea John did his best to dislodge. "I say unto you," he replied, "that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. It is no distinction to be descended from Abraham, much less will such descent assure your reception in the kingdom. The great condition of entrance will be repentance and moral uprightness. The kingdom is for Jews, to be sure, but only for upright Jews. Therefore, repent, for the kingdom is at hand."

6. In the Jordan River, probably by immersion. This action symbolized their repentance and their new resolve by typifying the washing away of their sins, and leaving them fresh and clean.

7. Rome. The feeling of hostility was not reciprocated. Rome was too vast an empire to take especial notice of Judea, which was only an obscure little third-rate province. The bitterness was all on one side.

8. The expectation was that God would send His Messiah to organize Judea into a world-supreme nation. The Jews had long felt certain that they were the one nation which God loved best and favored most. The most natural destiny that the favorite nation of Omnipotent God could expect was world-supremacy. For what was the use of being God's favorite nation if such a glorious destiny was not in store for them? At that time Rome was practically world-supreme. In other words, Rome actually held the position to which Judea aspired. Rome had done all the drudgery of actual world-conquest. Now it remained only to conquer Rome, and Judea would at once fulfil her destiny, and God's favor would bear its vast fruition. The time was therefore ripe for the appearance of the Messiah. All things pointed to his immediate coming. The atmosphere was electrified with expectation.

9. The words mean the same thing, the "anointed," the "chosen." Thus they are not properly names, but titles of an office.

10. He would be a man of superhuman power, able to accomplish wonderful things. Since the task that lay before the Messiah, the conquest of Rome, was a superhuman task,

it followed logically that he must be divinely gifted. The cruder and more popular conception perhaps even pictured him as a celestial being, appearing suddenly from the clouds, with legions of the heavenly host in his train.

11. John's remarkable personality, his power as a preacher, and his great popularity aroused the suspicion in certain fervid imaginations that he himself might be the expected Messiah. Any man of marked ability aroused such suspicions, so eager was the general expectancy. Accordingly, he was asked directly "whether haply he were the Christ." John as directly denied the office, saying that the Messiah, when he came, would be a man so much greater than himself that he would be unworthy to unloose the latchet of his shoes. (Luke iii. 15, 16.)

12. Luke i. 36. John's mother, Elizabeth, is spoken of as being "kinswoman" to Jesus' mother, Mary. This would make John and Jesus distant cousins. There is nothing more definite than this verse.

Picture, John the Baptist Preaching, by Titian; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 43.)

VII. Finding His Work.

1. According to the Matthew story, John would have restrained him. The other Gospels give no hint of hesitation on John's part.

2. He hesitated because, as Matthew would have us believe, he saw in Jesus the Messiah who was to come, and he felt it highly unfitting that the Messiah himself should receive baptism at the hands of his prophet. It would have been far more fitting that the prophet should have been baptized by the Messiah. John's supposed recognition of Jesus as the Messiah at this time is, however, illogical and contradictory. John had no idea that this carpenter was the Messiah, or he would not have asked the question in Matthew xi. 2, 3. In fact, it is not conceivable that John hesitated at all about baptizing Jesus.

3. It meant hearty agreement with John's views as to the condition of membership in the kingdom, and a desire to fulfill that condition.

4. By immersion, in all probability, as the Baptists perform the rite. 5. In the river Jordan.

6. The Holy Spirit descended as a dove upon him, and a heavenly voice spoke words of commendation to him. The three first Gospels are unanimous in relating the incident. We like to think that the accounts of the dove and the voice refer not to any outward or visible event, but rather to an inner spiritual experience which came to the soul of Jesus himself. Such an experience of spiritual exhilaration and uplift is wholly intelligible when we remember that Jesus by his baptism had accepted a high and stern duty,—the duty of seconding John as a preacher of the coming Messiah. This duty demanded a certain degree of courage and entailed a certain degree of self-denial. His old occupation must be given up. Popular comment and criticism must be braved. An entirely new task must be taken in hand. The change was made at the dictates of conscience, and meant a distinct moral victory. And there came naturally the moment of spiritual exaltation which ever accompanies man's fidelity to conscience. This moment of spiritual exaltation we may see hinted at in the incident of the dove and the voice. The trouble is, How could such an inner personal experience make itself evident to the senses of an outsider, so that the report of it may appear in the narrator's account? Our only supposition is that these moments of spiritual exaltation, like the temptations, which were purely spiritual experiences, were told by Jesus to his disciples, perhaps in the form of parables, and thus found their way into the narrative.

7. Because nowhere does he refer to his work as a carpenter; nowhere does he mention it or allude to it; none of his parables are drawn from it. He is absolutely silent concerning it, and his silence seems to argue that he felt no particle of real interest in it.

8. Simply in obedience to the popular custom, which said that the son should go into his father's trade. We may not

doubt that Jesus went into the work of a carpenter, and continued in it until his baptism and the change which that baptism signalized. See Mark vi. 3, where the people in the synagogue identified him as being the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joseph, etc. It is equally clear that at the time of his baptism and during the early months of his preaching there was no idea in his mind of himself as being the Messiah. He was simply another voice, another fore-runner, another John sent to prepare the nation for the Messiah's coming. Both he and John shared the national expectancy. They both believed that the time was fulfilled, and that the Messiah would come at any moment. They were almost alone in the belief, however, that the Messiah would insist upon repentance and moral rectitude as a condition of membership in his kingdom; and because they saw the nation so wofully unprepared to meet this moral test, which they were sure would be imposed, they felt it incumbent upon them to prepare the nation, to warn them, while yet there was time, of the conditions which would be imposed. There is tremendous generosity, there is the true instinct of service and helpfulness, in both Jesus and John.

9. Luke iii. 23. About thirty years old. We are told that John began to preach in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar, and, as events appear to have moved along rapidly, Jesus was baptized not very long after John began to preach. Tiberius received imperial power over the provinces of Rome in A.D. 11. The fifteenth year of his rule would be A.D. 26. If Jesus was born in B.C. 6, he would be thirty-two years old at least when John began to preach, and he himself began to preach very soon after this time. Thus he could not have been much over thirty-two when he began his real work as a preacher.

10. Yes, according to Mark's account, which is in some ways our most trustworthy Gospel. In this Matthew also agrees. John's Gospel, however, leads us to infer that both men were for a while at work at the same time (John iii. 26 and iv. 1.).

11. Up to Galilee. Presumably because he was more at home in that region, he had more friends, and obeyed a natural

impulse to give his own friends and neighbors the first benefit of his message. John iv. 3 leads us to suppose that he withdrew to Galilee in order to avoid all possible friction or jealousy between his disciples and those of John.

12. Very closely when he first begins. He almost takes the words out of John's mouth. Compare Matthew iv. 17, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," with what John says in Matthew iii. 1, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Picture, Baptism of Christ, by Maratta; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 254.)

VIII. A New Home.

1. The enthusiasm which came from feeling that he was at last doing what God especially wanted him to do. He had found his true work, the work which God had assigned to him, and he felt for it an eagerness and a joy which were nothing less than a power.

2. The first day of the week was, and still is, Sunday. The Jews observed as their Sabbath not the first, but the seventh day of the week, Saturday. This Sabbath began at dusk on Friday evening, and lasted until dusk on Saturday evening.

3. The synagogue service was composed of four principal features: (1) the reading of a passage from Deuteronomy vi., preceded and followed by benediction; (2) prayer or psalms; (3) reading of a long passage from both the Pentateuch and the Prophets; and (4) the interpretation of these passages into the language of the time and an expounding of their meaning. The parts (3) and (4) were not always performed by the official, but might be done by any present who could read Hebrew, or whom the official called upon, or who signified his desire to perform them. Jesus was perhaps called upon to read in the synagogue because of his ability to read Hebrew, or he might have signified his wish to read and expound.

4. Not at all what we mean by a book, but a great scroll,

upon which the text was written, and which was wound upon two rods.

5. Isaiah lxi. 6. At first with wonder at the grace of his words, then with resentment at his presumption in attempting to expound the scripture to them.

7. They took him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built, that they might throw him down headlong.

8. Capernaum, the site of which has not been satisfactorily determined. Two little clusters of ruins on the north-western shores of the Sea of Galilee are at present dividing between them the distinction of being the ruins of Capernaum.

9. The Sea of Galilee. 10. The Sea of Galilee, the Sea of Tiberius, the Lake of Gennesaret. This was a little lake about fourteen miles long and about seven miles wide at the widest part.

11. Nazareth was in the center of a grazing country, and its chief industry was sheep-raising and some farming. Capernaum, like all the little towns on the lake, was chiefly a fishing center, although there was a great deal of gardening in the narrow strip of fertile land along the western border of the lake. The town of Nazareth is now known as En-Nasira, although the modern town is perhaps a mile or so removed from the situation of the ancient home of Jesus. The old Nazareth was located well up on the sides of the high hill from the summit of which the angry villagers tried to throw Jesus headlong. Nazareth was a quiet, little out-of-the-way town, not far from the great thoroughfare which ran through the country, and yet not drawn into the current of active life and excitement. From its peaceful pastures and farms Jesus doubtless found a great part of his material for parables and analogies. Capernaum, one of the fishing villages on the Sea of Galilee, was a different kind of place, active and bustling. There is uncertainty as to the exact location of Capernaum. Whether the present Khan-Minyeh, or Tell-Hum, two clusters of ruins quite near together, and both situated on the north-western shore of the lake, is the site of the old Capernaum, no one can surely say.

12. Luke iv. 24. Or, better still, the Matthew version, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." This, in a word, explains the action of Jesus in removing to Capernaum. The rejection of Jesus at Nazareth is not surprising in view of the conservatism of the place. The neighbors naturally resented the idea that one of their own number, a man with whose life and family they had for years been very familiar, should presume to teach them, and pose before them as an expounder of the Law and the Prophets. Moreover, we must remember that Jesus put a new and unwelcome interpretation upon the passage he had read in the synagogue. He applied the words of Isaiah to himself. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon *me*, because he hath anointed *me* to preach good tidings to the poor," etc. This was presumption that almost amounted to blasphemy in their eyes. Therefore, they rejected him.

Picture, Site of Capernaum; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 213.)

IX. Making Friends.

1. Peter, which means a stone or rock. It was evidently a nickname, for his original name was undoubtedly Simon. Whether this nickname was given to him by Jesus, as we might infer from Matthew xvi. 18, or had been bestowed before Jesus knew him, we cannot say. Regarding Simon Peter we know little save that he was the son of Jonas, that he was an elderly man, warm-hearted, frank, impulsive, and perhaps rather unstable. His nature was open and breezy, and his personality somewhat aggressive. He is in many respects the leading spirit among the twelve. His self-assertiveness never permitted him to keep silent or to stay in the background. Thanks to his ejaculations, we are given many a precious sidelight upon the real significance of the words and situations in which the actions of Jesus are set.

2. Casting their nets into the sea; that is, making a "cast" to catch some fish.

3. "Come with me, and I will make you fishers of men."

He meant of course that he would impart to them something of his own enthusiasm of helpfulness and something of his own lofty purpose, so that they should become his collaborators in the task of preparing the nation for the Messiah's coming.

4. Seated in another boat with their father Zebedee, and mending their nets.

5. The multitude pressed about him so closely that, in order to get "elbow room," he stepped into a boat and pushed off from shore a little, and addressed his hearers from that point of vantage.

6. The net, which they had vainly cast all the night, now came up so laden with fishes that it began to tear. The miracle is related also in John xxi. John gives the actual number of fishes caught, 153; while Luke says merely that both boats were filled so full of the catch that they began to sink. Luke relates this miracle at this place in order to give some explanation of the readiness of these four men to leave their trade and throw in their lot with Jesus. With such a miracle performed before their very eyes, they could not hesitate to recognize in Jesus a man to be trusted and respected, and would be ready to obey him at once when he asked them to leave their nets and follow him. It is, however, a mistake to think that Jesus called the disciples at first sight, and that at this first calling they left all and followed him. The band of the disciples was probably gathered very gradually, after a protracted acquaintance and friendship with each member, as a result of which that member decided to make a change in his occupation, and become a companion and collaborer with the leader who could awaken such deep and powerful enthusiasm in the heart. Luke's account of the miracle which was performed is not to be trusted, not only because we cannot agree to the miraculous performances of Christ, but because it is wholly contrary to Christ's spirit and practice to gain recognition for himself through the giving of a "sign" in proof of his character and mission. He consistently refuses to give a sign, and insists always upon being accepted by virtue of his motive and his purpose. In treating of the miracles of Jesus, it must be remembered that the Gospels do not give us

testimony that is sufficient to induce us to give up our trust in the orderliness and reliability of nature. There may be such things as miracles, but we cannot believe there are. Certainly, we cannot believe in them upon the faulty and often self-contradictory testimony of the Gospels. It is too easy to explain them in other and more reasonable ways.

7. He fell at Jesus' feet, and prayed, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The prayer is not wholly intelligible, but it would seem that Simon was somewhat frightened by the miracle, and considered himself too unworthy a man to be made the beneficiary of such wonderful power. The prayer is not without its significance. Like Simon, we feel a comparative security while living in a world whose operations we can hope to understand and whose processes we can believe to be ordered by a reliable law. But as soon as the miraculous enters into our world, to destroy our standards of security and to render our attempted foresight of no avail, we are naturally frightened. We feel helpless and uncertain.

8. Luke says that they were partners with Simon. This is quite possible, though we have no better authority than this single hint to assist us.

9. The Gospels are unanimous in saying there were twelve of the more intimate companions and disciples. There are several names mentioned later on, like Joseph of Arimathea, of those who were disciples of Jesus in the sense that they believed in him. Then, too, there is the reference, in Luke x. 1 and 17, to the seventy whom Jesus appointed to go about and preach the warning that he was so eager to publish. These seventy were perhaps a larger and less intimate band of adherents. We hear nothing more of them. The real disciples, the constant companions of Jesus, were but twelve in number. Their names are given in Matthew x. 2-4 and in parallel passages in the other Gospels.

10. The word means "pupil," one who is taught. In the New Testament it has a somewhat closer meaning than this,—not only one who is taught, but an adherent, a colaborer, one who is identified with a certain leader and adopts a similar line of conduct. It was quite common for the prominent

teachers of the day to have their little groups of disciples. Thus we have several references to the disciples of John the Baptist. In fact, there is a theory that several of Jesus' disciples had been disciples of John, which is wholly natural when we remember that Jesus and John were very near each other in purpose and conviction.

11. We know that Matthew, or Levi, the son of Alphæus, was a Publican; that is, a tax-gatherer, one of a class who were cordially hated and distrusted by the people. Matthew's office, or toll-booth, was in Capernaum. His duty was to collect the customs fee from traders journeying along the caravan road from Damascus to Acre or entering the country from the tetrarchy of Philip, across the lake. Legends tell us that Thomas was a carpenter, and that Thaddeus and Simon were shepherds, who had been in the little group of shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, to whom the angel appeared, announcing the birth of Christ. Of the others we know little save their names.

12. They undertook his work of preaching, going about among the villages and telling the hearers that the Messiah was coming, and that in order to be prepared for him it was necessary for them to repent of their sins and lead better lives. Jesus worked under the pressure of haste, for he felt that the Messiah might come at any moment, and he shrank from thinking how many of the people the Messiah would find unwarned and unprepared. It was his desire, therefore, to reduplicate himself as extensively as possible, to find other mouths for his message, in order that the dissemination of the warning might be as thorough and general as possible. When sending them out to preach, he instructs them to confine themselves to Jews, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, telling them they would not have time to preach even to these fellow-countrymen of theirs before the Messiah would appear. Even among these he warns them to be short and almost curt, because there was no time to spend in laboring over obstinate persons. Again, he ejaculates that the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few. (See Matthew ix. 37, x. 5-23.) There lay upon him all the time the sense of much to be done,

and but little time to do it in. The disciples were called to help him in this great task.

Picture, Christ and the Fishermen, by Zimmermann; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 47.)

X. A Wonderful Discovery.

1. In the synagogue in Capernaum.

2. Some one of his hearers, being possessed of a demon, suddenly cried out loud, so that all eyes were at once turned upon him.

3. He was possessed of an unclean spirit. Just what this disorder was it is not easy for us to understand. The symptoms which are described—dumbness, deafness, blindness, savage fierceness, abnormal strength, falling into fire or water, convulsions, raving, grinding the teeth, foaming at the mouth—are all symptoms of epilepsy. The illness may have been something like our fits, or convulsions. We must remember, too, that, when one was possessed by a demon, he did not always show his trouble in these physical ways. The popular notion ascribed any uncouth or inexplicable action or word or speech to possession by a demon. In fact, it is curious to find in some of our own modes of speech a striking analogy to this notion of possession by demons. When we jocosely say that a friend's fad is due to his having caught such and such a craze or is to be explained by his having taken some microbe into his spiritual system, we are approaching, in jest, very near to the old crude idea of demoniacal possession. In short, this was a convenient way of explaining almost all mysterious disorders, whether physical, mental, or spiritual. They were said to be caused by some demon. It is not impossible to understand Jesus' power of casting out these demons or curing these disorders. Because of his strong, quiet, self-confident personality, he was able to substitute a sane and steady impulse for the impulse which was causing the trouble. This is frequently done in our hospitals and asylums. Of course, this does not explain the physical cures that he is said

to have wrought. It were useless to try to explain them. It simply explains the great influence he could exert upon diseased imaginations and overwrought nerves,—an influence which was considered remarkable then, and is perhaps no less remarkable, though better understood, now.

4. From many references to demoniacal possession it would seem that disorders of this kind were quite common in that country and at that time.

5. Mark i. 24. "Holy one of Israel" of course means "Messiah." The demon in the man, by his superhuman insight, recognized the real nature of Jesus at once. We may well doubt the exact authenticity of the words. They were probably put in at a later day for the sake of the testimony to Christ's nature which they were supposed to convey.

6. Mark i. 25. A stern, peremptory word of command, through which the influence of his own stronger personality was at once felt.

7. The sufferer was wrenched by a last convulsion, and then left trembling and exhausted, but quiet.

8. It means that the troublesome impulse, illusion, hallucination, imagination, whatever it was, which made him do these strange things, was suddenly rectified, and the man's proper mental balance restored.

9. They were all amazed, and looked on with awe. We cannot think that this amazement meant that such cures were never performed, for we know that they were performed, or at least attempted, by many people. It means simply that a man who could perform such a cure with such success was an uncommon man, and one to be treated with respect.

10. It was certainly not peculiar to Jesus, for we have his own words to show that others cast out demons. (See Matthew xii. 27.) The question, "By whom do your sons cast them out?" shows plainly that other men besides Jesus practised this cure. His ability to exorcise the demons of his day was destined to play an important part in his own spiritual development, and therefore it should not be neglected. We have seen what this ability was, just the influence of his strong, self-confident nature. While we may understand it and think

it no especial marvel, we must remember that to Jesus and to the people about him it seemed a wonderful thing. It was by no means unknown, and yet it was rare enough to be considered very remarkable. That we must not overlook.

11. His reputation spread at once over the whole region, so that numbers of people thronged to him, bringing friends or acquaintances who were suffering from various ailments and whom they hoped to have cured by his influence. Not the possession of the power merely, but the generous willingness he displayed in using the power, is an important factor in this increased popularity of his.

12. Without doubt. He owned no higher or stronger motive than to be of help to his fellow-men. The world has never seen a man more anxious to minister unto others than Jesus of Nazareth, or one more grateful for the means of rendering such assistance which might be discovered in himself.

Picture, Christ teaching in the Synagogue, by Bida; (Brown's Bible Pictures, No. 701.)

XI. An Open-Air Church.

1. The Beatitudes.

2. The name refers to the character of the passage. Each verse begins with the word "Blessed." Hence the passage is called the Beatitudes, or the Blessings. It is worthy of note that Jesus lays his emphasis upon those good qualities by which a man is blessed, although in the parallel passage in Luke vi. 20-26 the four blessings are offset by four corresponding woes. Luke has probably given us the older version of the saying.

3. The jot was the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It corresponds to the Greek "Iota" and to the Hebrew "Yod." A tittle was one of the small bends, or diacritical marks, by which certain Hebrew letters were distinguished. The meaning here is of course that Jesus would preserve the old Hebrew law so carefully that not even its smallest letter or accent would be overlooked or neglected.

4. The word "Raca" means probably a term of great scorn, expressing contempt for the person or thing to which it was addressed. In our colloquial speech we may find a parallel in the term "bosh."

5. "Thou shalt not kill" is a form of one of the Ten Commandments. (See Exodus xx. 13.) "Thou shalt not forswear thyself" is a quotation from Leviticus xix. 12. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," is taken from Leviticus xxiv. 20. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy" is from Leviticus xix. 18 and Deuteronomy xxiii. 3-6.

These passages show us pretty plainly that Jesus had not only acquired a good knowledge of the Old Testament, but that he had read the passages understandingly, and was in the habit of thinking of them in their actual correlation to human life. There are many other instances which go to prove the same thing,—his remarkable familiarity with the sacred literature of his people. Compared with the peasants around him, Jesus was a well-educated man. In fact, his education compares very favorably with that of the Rabbis and Pharisees with whom he had frequent encounters. This education of his was acquired not by exceptional advantages, but by an eager and intelligent use of such advantages as he had.

6. Jesus commands his hearers to obey the law as it had been given to them, not only to the letter, but in spirit also. Righteousness with him was not merely a matter of outward action, but of thought or impulse as well. For instance, to his way of thinking, it was just as wicked to want to kill or injure another man as to actually kill or injure him. So he says not only, "Thou shalt not kill," but "Thou shalt not even want to kill." Likewise in the matter of forswearing one's self, he commanded them not only not to break their oaths, but not even to make any oaths. It was a rather daring thing in him to attempt to improve upon the sacred law of his people, but it shows the great originality and simplicity of his own thought. He was the prophet of a deeper and truer righteousness, and it is worthy of note that his own teachings were given not in

contradiction, but in addition, to the law which his people already possessed.

7. Not at all. The words mean simply that the hypocrites took pains to boast of their charity and to advertise in subtle ways their almsgivings, so that they might have what they considered their due credit.

8. We call this figurative speech. This particular figure of speech is the hyperbole, of which Jesus was very fond and which he continually uses. Hyperbole is, of course, the use of exaggeration for the sake of emphasis. We find countless uses of hyperbole in his sayings. For instance, when he speaks of removing mountains or uprooting sycamore-trees by faith, or when he says that it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God, he is employing the hyperbole. It is necessary to remember this habit of his in order to understand him correctly.

9. The Lord's Prayer, so called because it is the prayer which the Lord taught his disciples. Be sure the children know it by heart, for it is the one common possession of all the sects and classes of Christians the world over.

10. Solomon was the third king of Israel, and it was under his reign that the kingdom reached its greatest power and glory. Solomon reigned almost a thousand years before Christ, and during all those years the Jews had looked back upon him as the monarch of their golden age. The grandeur and luxury of his court had become proverbial.

11. The lily of the field was a small scarlet blossom with four petals, growing close to the ground. It was about the size of our wild daisy, and was almost as common. Jesus purposely picks out the humblest and commonest wild flower for his comparison with Solomon.

12. A mote is simply a tiny speck. A beam is what it means to-day, a great timber. Here is another use of hyperbole. Of course, it is literally impossible for a man to carry a beam in his eye. Jesus wishes to emphasize the injustice of attempting to correct faults in others when there are overwhelming faults in ourselves. He says, "First correct your own

faults, and then you will be better fitted to correct your friends' faults."

Picture, *The Sermon on the Mount*, by A. Noack; (Brown's famous Pictures, No. 1884.)

XII. A Trip Across the Lake.

1. We know that Peter was a fisherman, and that he with his brother Andrew owned a fishing-boat. It might have been this boat which Jesus used in order to cross the lake.

2. The Lake of Gennesaret is small and shallow, and surrounded by hills. Such bodies of water are very apt to be squally and treacherous. It was such a squall which fell upon them as soon as they were started. The shallow waters of the lake were suddenly torn into angry waves, which threatened to swamp their craft. Such squalls were very common.

3. They called to Jesus, who had fallen asleep in the little cabin in the stern of the boat, and implored his assistance to save them from their peril. These squalls stop as suddenly as they begin, and they had hardly waked Jesus when the wind abated and the waves subsided.

4. The town of Gergesa, which with the region about it was known as the country of the Gergesenes.

5. According to Matthew, two demoniacs who dwelt in the graveyard. It was the custom at that time to consider these demoniacs as being virtually dead, inasmuch as they were not in their right minds. Therefore, incurable demoniacs were forced to live outside of cities or villages, where dead bodies were buried. Lepers were treated in the same way and for the same reason. According to Mark and Luke there was but one of these demoniacs.

6. The sufferer said his name was "Legion," for he was many. We may take this to mean that he was the victim of a multitude of discordant impulses and notions. It was by suppressing this multitude of warring voices in the poor man's mind and by giving him instead a single consistent impulse that Jesus restored him to sanity.

7. The account tells us that the demons whom Jesus cast out of the man demanded some other home, and got his permission to enter into a herd of swine who were feeding nearby. The herd immediately, rushed down the steep hillside, and were drowned in the lake.

8. The swineherd in his alarm ran into the village, and told what had happened to the sufferer and to the swine. The villagers then came out, and, meeting the demoniac clothed and in his right mind, walking quietly at Jesus' side, they were struck with amazement, and implored Jesus to depart from their village.

9. They were afraid of him. A man who could do such things perplexed them and upset all their calculations.

10. He very naturally asked permission to accompany Jesus. Perhaps he felt that there was some danger of a return of his malady, and he wanted to be with the man in whose presence he found protection against his illness.

11. Jesus did not wish to have people depend upon him. He insisted repeatedly that a man's salvation must lie with himself, and must be the product of his own effort and self-discipline; and, while he was ready to point the way to health and salvation, he saw that a salvation which depended entirely upon himself was neither real nor permanent. "The kingdom of God is within you," he says; and, while he could turn men's attention to this inner kingdom of God, he could not bring it to pass for others. They must find it for themselves. Jesus always shrank from destroying a man's spiritual self-dependence. Therefore, he told this demoniac whom he had cured to return to his own home and live his own self-disciplined life.

12. The villagers were in no condition to listen to him with any sort of profit. As at Nazareth, so here, their minds were full of a prejudice which would be hostile to any intelligent acceptance of his message.

Picture, Peace, be Still, by G. Doré; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 78.)

XIII. Days of Happiness.

1. Galilee, which was the northernmost of the three great provinces. The middle one of these three provinces was Samaria. Samaria was inhabited by a people with whom the rest of the Jews held a long-standing grudge. No strict Jew would even pass through the country of Samaria. In the words of the Gospel, "The Jew had no dealings with the Samaritan." The presence of Samaria had the effect therefore of splitting the country into two isolated portions, Galilee and Judea, separated from each other by forty miles of hostile land. This explains why it is that Jesus confined himself to Galilee, and also why it is that he was not better known in Judea.

2. Galilee is bounded on the north by the river Leontes, on the east by the Jordan and the two lakes of Merom and Gennesaret, on the south by the great Plain of Esdraelon, and on the west by the Mediterranean Sea.

3. It is about fifty miles long by twenty-five miles wide, and contains roughly 1,250 square miles. It is thus exactly the size of the state of Rhode Island. It was subdivided into two portions, known as Upper and Lower Galilee. Upper Galilee was far more hilly than Lower Galilee. The people were an active, intelligent, headstrong race. Lower Galilee was probably more familiar to Christ than Upper.

4. Syria is the country directly north, although politically Palestine was a portion of Syria.

5. Matthew tells us that those who were demoniac, epileptic, and palsied were brought to Christ to be cured. We also have statements that lepers and blind people were brought to him. It would seem that leprosy and demoniacal possession were the two prevailing diseases of the time.

6. The Decapolis was a league of ten Greek cities, as the name implies. These cities were all located in the region just east of the Sea of Galilee. They were Scythopolis, Hyppos, Gadara, Pella, Philadelphia, Gerasa, Dion, Canatha, Damascus, and Raphana. These cities were inhabited by

Greeks, and were permitted to form a league to resist the encroachment of Jewish culture and religion. There were, however, many Jews among them.

7. The region beyond Jordan is called Perea.

8. He arose early, a great while before day, and went out upon the hillsides to pray. There are several references to this practice of Christ. The words give us a suggestion of his spiritual loneliness and of his dependence upon his Heavenly Father.

9. Christ's habit of speaking in parables frequently caused serious misunderstanding on the part of his disciples. With their unimaginative minds they took literally what he uttered figuratively. The passage in Mark viii. 14-21 shows how they misunderstood him and how discouraged he sometimes got over their stupidity. It is the fate of all great men to be misunderstood, and Jesus was no exception to this rule.

10. In spite of all this misunderstanding and in spite of the occasional hostility of the Pharisees, Jesus had a great source of strength in his sense of partnership with his Heavenly Father. This sense of partnership in him was wonderfully strong. He felt himself bound to God by the warmest and most intimate ties of filial love. God was the Father, and he was the Son, and what the Father wanted him to do, he himself most eagerly wanted to do. The Father's wish and hope were his. He had no other impulse or desire. He was working with God, and God's strength was his strength, and God's victory would be his victory. His message of sonship unto God and of partnership with God was his gospel. This he tries to teach to his hearers. And in his own case this gave him a strength which made good every earthly weakness and supplied every earthly lack.

11. By no means. There were many places where he was greeted with indifference and obduracy. In Matthew xi. 20-30 we have his own words to testify to the indifference of some of the villages. He faced a great opposition in the self-complacency of the Jews, which was just as great among them as it is among us.

12. The real basis of his happiness was his companionship

with God. With God on his side, he could not be gloomy or discouraged, no matter what earthly opposition he met.

Picture, Christ teaching from a Boat, by Hofmann; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 76.)

XIV. Becoming Famous.

1. Babylon was the famous city on the Tigris River in the country of Mesopotamia. At the time of Christ, Babylon was not so important as it had been five hundred years before. It was still a great commercial center, and many merchants sent their goods from Babylon down into Egypt. Babylon was several hundred miles to the east of Israel.

2. A caravan is a company of travelers who band together for protection and companionship in making a long journey across the desert wilds of Eastern countries. The Mormons and gold-seekers of our own early days used to cross the prairies and mountain ranges of the West in long caravans. These caravans of ours consisted of prairie-schooners, drawn by oxen, and of horsemen. The old caravans of Christ's time consisted of long strings of camels and donkeys, which were laden with merchandise.

3. A good map will show the principal roads that ran through the country. The greatest of these is the so-called Sea Road, starting from Damascus, crossing the Jordan River at the Bridge of Jacob's Daughters just south of Lake Merom, then running through Galilee, across the Plain of Esdraelon, and so down to Egypt along the eastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea.

4. Cæsarea, Joppa, and Azotus are all upon this great caravan trail, where it runs along the edge of the sea. These towns are still in existence, and still enjoy some prominence as commercial centers.

5. Antioch was a large and famous city on the north-east corner of the Mediterranean Sea. It was a second Rome in size and political importance. It was at the height of its prosperity at the time of Christ, and was destined to play an im-

portant part in the spread of Christianity under Paul during the years immediately following Christ's death. It was also a great commercial center. As we look at the map, it is easy to see how actively the little region of Galilee was drawn into the life of the times. All the trade from the great cities of Babylon, Damascus, and Antioch which was destined for Egypt had to pass through Galilee. Thus Galilee kept in touch with the political and intellectual life of the times.

6. Tyre and Sidon are two famous little cities of Phœnicia, just north of Galilee. They are both upon the seacoast.

7. The Canaanites, who are mentioned several times in the Gospels, were remnants of the old savage inhabitants of the land of Canaan, who were pushed out of their home when Joshua and the tribes of Israel invaded the land fifteen hundred years before. These original inhabitants were pushed up into the north, precisely as the red-skins were pushed further and further west by the advancing frontier of American civilization. The Jews still looked upon the descendants of these Canaanites as being hostile to them, and ranked them as Gentiles.

8. There was, of course, no post-office system such as we have. People did not often write letters. Official despatches were forwarded by private messenger, and other messages gradually reached their destination through the courtesy of chance travelers. The common news of the day was disseminated by word of mouth, and, of course, spread slowly and sometimes very inaccurately. It was thus that Christ's reputation grew, and its growth was not only slow, but was perhaps colored and exaggerated by constant passage from mouth to mouth.

9. Undoubtedly his reputation was based chiefly upon his healing power, that being the part of his work which made the strongest appeal to common people.

10. Four men suddenly appeared, bearing a sufferer upon a bed. The crowd was so dense that they could not even approach the door.

11. They clambered to the roof of the house, and with their hands they tore a great hole in the thatch with which the

house was covered, and lowered the sufferer through this hole into Christ's presence. This was a very simple thing to do, when we remember how the houses were constructed.

12. Without noticing the sufferer's condition, Christ said to him, "Son, thy sins are forgiven," as though that were the most important thing for the man to hear. It would seem to show that Christ never lost his sense of proportion, but that he always laid, and always taught others to lay, the first emphasis upon their spiritual rather than their physical health. To have a well conscience was more important in Christ's eyes than to have a well body.

Picture, *Healing the Sick Child*, by Gabriel Max; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 71.)

XV. Hints and Suspicions.

1. The national Messiah. As we have seen, the expectation of the Messiah's coming was especially strong at that time. The political situation, Rome being then the mistress of the world, seemed to the Jews to argue for the speedy coming of their nation's Deliverer. It would only be necessary now for their Christ to lead them in victorious conflict against Rome and at once the long-expected destiny which their prophets had foretold for hundreds of years would be fulfilled, and they would become what God had always meant them to be, the world-supreme nation. We must exercise our imagination to understand how keen and eager was this feeling of expectancy.

2. Some of the people, doubtless, believed that he would come as a celestial warrior, appearing suddenly from the clouds of heaven, with waving banners and sounding trumpets and with legions of the heavenly host at his back. Others believed that he would come as a prophet and statesman, without any of the miraculous accessories, but with birth and education and political influence at his command. The common people were prepared to see in any remarkable personality the Christ of the nation.

3. John the Baptist by his fervor and his power as a preacher

had excited the suspicion that he might be the Messiah. See Luke iii. 15-17, where the people "reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ," and where John definitely denies that character.

4. So eager was the expectation of the Messiah's coming that it did not take more than a very few days for the suspicions of the people to fasten upon Jesus. His masterful personality, his moral earnestness, his eloquent power, most of all his remarkable ability in healing their diseases, all seemed to indicate very clearly to them his Messianic character. It was not long before the rumor was well under way that this carpenter of Nazareth might very well be the Christ, and without doubt the rumor speedily reached the ears of Jesus himself that popular enthusiasm was giving him this reputation.

5. Among the Galilean peasants, more especially among those of them whom he had healed.

6. At first, perhaps, with a good-humored denial; later on with a sober silence, as of one who does not know whether to deny or to affirm, but who being himself in doubt wants time to settle the question for himself. Once the suspicion was dropped in his mind by the enthusiasm of his friends, Jesus could not deny that there were grounds for such an idea. When his attention was called to the matter, he recognized in himself certain traits and aptitudes which might argue for his own Christhood. But the whole matter was one of such great moment, involving such personal dangers and such tremendous responsibilities, that he felt the need of time to decide the question by his best thought and prayer.

7. Leprosy was the disease common in the land of Palestine in the time of Christ. There appears to have been a false and a true leprosy. The false leprosy was a comparatively harmless, non-contagious skin disease, which appeared in white scales or blotches on various parts of the body. The words "a leper white as snow" would be applied to this false leprosy. True leprosy was a revolting and fatal disease which attacked the joints, and which after running a course of about nine years caused death. It was slightly contagious. For this reason lepers were universally shunned, and were usually forced to

live in little communities outside the village limits. It was the custom to stone lepers to avoid contagion, and for the same reason lepers were obliged to cry, "Unclean, unclean," when anybody approached. Leprosy is not unknown to-day. There is the famous leper colony on the Island of Molokai, where Father Damien spent his life, and there is the leper colony on the Island of Penikese.

8. He did not wish this reputation, which he found himself acquiring, to become so wide-spread as to cause him embarrassment. He himself was not yet convinced that he was the Messiah. He felt that to have it generally known that he could perform such cures would put him in a false position and would perhaps unduly influence him in settling his own problem. Therefore, he charged those whom he cured to see that they told no man who had cured them.

9. The Pharisees were afraid of the influence which this humble carpenter was acquiring among the common people. They could not reconcile themselves to a Messiah born among the peasant classes. They thought it advisable to get him out of the way before his influence and his pretensions had become too unwieldy for them.

10. No. The more he charged them to secrecy, the more eagerly they published abroad what great things he had done for them. His reputation increased in spite of himself.

11. The Pharisees wanted a Messiah born among their own class, a man of their own aristocratic antecedents, education, and position. For a peasant to claim to be the Christ would be in their eyes an act of blasphemy.

12. They would treat him with ridicule and bitter hostility. They would laugh at him at first. Then in their wrath they would charge him with blasphemy, and punish him as blasphemers were punished,—that is, by death.

Picture, Healing the Sick, by Schönherr; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 69.)

XVI. A Secret Problem.

1. The problem was whether or not God intended him to be the Messiah of the nation. As we have seen, Jesus shared the prevailing expectancy of the Messiah's speedy coming. The thought that he himself might be the Messiah had never occurred to him until it was put in his mind by the enthusiasm of his friends and acquaintances. Once the suggestion was made, however, he was obliged to concede that there were good grounds for it. It was reasonable and possible. There were arguments both for and against. It only remained to weigh the arguments, to search his own soul with earnest prayer and self-analysis for the will of God, and, if possible, to decide the question. This was his secret problem.

2. By no means. It was the most difficult problem that he had ever been called upon or that he ever would be called upon to decide. It was the great crisis in his life, and he approached it with all the hesitation and care which a deep-minded man would feel.

3. It would be a matter of life and death to him. If he should decide that he was not the Messiah, he would live out his natural life in the quiet and joyful security which was so attractive to him, busily engaged in the congenial tasks of preaching and of helping his neighbors, surrounded by friends, and gratified by the consciousness that he was doing with all his might the work he was best fitted to do. If he should decide that he was the Messiah, he knew that it would be impossible to convince the influential men of the nation of the justice of his claim. He knew that they would ridicule him and do their best to kill him. Life and safety and happiness, as against shame, mockery, and death, depended upon his decision.

4. His disciples would necessarily share in a measure his own fate. They had thrown in their lot with him. His decision would influence their fortunes. This fact complicated the matter extremely. He was deciding the question not for himself alone, but for them.

5. He would permit no outside influence. He felt that this was a question which lay solely between himself and his Heavenly Father. No other opinion or argument was allowed to intrude. It was a subject which he would not discuss with his friends, and which he would not allow them to discuss in his hearing.

6. For a man so eagerly sought after by the people and so much in demand by those who wished to have him preach or perform some cure, it was very hard to be by himself even for a few moments. Everybody craves at certain times a little solitude. Just at this crisis Jesus felt the frequent craving for solitude which would permit him to think and pray undisturbed. But there was always some questioner to be answered or some sufferer to be helped, and escape from these was well-nigh impossible.

7. We are told in Matthew xiv. 2 that one day he sent the disciples ahead in the boat, while he himself dismissed the multitude and walked home alone. We have one or two references to his getting up a great while before day and going out upon the hillsides or into lonely places. In these ways he found occasion once in a while to be alone.

8. There was one great thought always upon his mind. He used these moments in prayer, laying his problem before his Heavenly Father and imploring wisdom and guidance to decide aright.

9. His Heavenly Father. The most striking thing about Jesus was his intimacy with God. God was to him a personal presence with whom he always dwelt. There was no thought, wish, or hope which he did not share with this divine presence.

10. We cannot believe that they did. To their simple minds it did not appear to be very much of a problem. They did not see as their Master saw what great issues were involved. They could not understand his hesitation, and could not sympathize with the anguish of his soul.

11. We cannot say how long the period of indecision lasted. Perhaps it extended over several months.

12. He knew himself to be wholly swayed by the will of God. He believed himself to be endowed with the strength

which God gives to all faithful servants. He saw the religious formalism and the spiritual poverty of the times, and knew that he could lead his people to a deeper and livelier knowledge of God, and could give them a truer worship. He recognized also his influence over the minds and hearts of his hearers,—an influence which the Messiah must possess in order to do his work. Most of all, he felt that he understood the true scope and emphasis of the Messiah's work, as a work of moral regeneration rather than of political success.

Picture, Jesus walking by the Sea, by Grunewald; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 48.)

XVII. Messengers From John.

1. John was in prison, according to Josephus, in the Fortress of Machærus. This was a famous fortress, combining both prison and palace, on the eastern shores of the Dead Sea. It was one of the palaces of the Judean kings.

2. The Gospel tells us that he had offended Herodias, the wife of King Herod, by denouncing her marriage. Herodias had been the wife of her uncle Philip. Herod had been married to the daughter of the Arabian king. One day, while Herod was visiting Philip, he fell in love with Herodias, and between them they agreed to evade their existing matrimonial relations and to join in an illegal and immoral marriage. Such a marriage was, of course, contrary to all law and all common decency, and gave great offence to the nation. It was this marriage which John the Baptist bitterly denounced. He spoke his mind so freely that he excited the fear and hatred of the guilty Herodias, who caused him to be arrested and thrown into prison.

3. See Matthew xi. 3. The question is just as blunt and direct as the question which the people had asked of John himself when he was preaching and baptizing near the Jordan River. The question may indicate to us something of the eagerness with which all men expected the Messiah. John in prison

had heard rumors of Christ's wonderful works and immediately leaped to the conclusion that a man who could do such things might very possibly be the Messiah, so he sent his disciples to find out.

4. The words "He that cometh," or, as the authorized version has it, "He that should come," referred directly and unmistakably to the Christ. In plain words, the question is as follows: "Are you the Christ, or are we mistaken?"

5. Jesus gave no direct answer to this direct question. He told John's disciples to tell their master what they saw and heard about him,—how the lepers were cleansed and the blind were given their sight and the poor had the gospel preached to them. In other words, he told them to give John a full report of the facts and the evidence, so that he might make up his own mind as to Jesus' nature.

6. The answer indicates that Jesus was yet undecided as to his own Messianic character. He was not yet ready to commit himself.

7. Like every generous-minded man, Jesus was very deeply concerned as to the influence which his actions might have upon the trustful and simple-minded friends who followed him so loyally and believed in him so implicitly. He realized that he held their fate in his hands, and the thought of doing anything which might lead them into error or difficulty was a constant and agonizing fear. The words, "Blessed is he who-soever shall not be offended in me," mean, therefore, "Happy is the man who shall not be led astray by anything that I do." The ejaculation amounts to a heart-felt prayer that he may not prove a false guide, and is another testimony to the great perplexity of mind in which he was struggling.

8. From Isaiah xxix. 18 and xxxv. 6. It is not to be supposed, therefore, that the words state exactly the result of Jesus' administrations. He uses these Old Testament words to denote in a general way the effect of his work upon the people.

9. They are decidedly sulky children. Their playmates asked them to play wedding, and they would not. Their playmates asked them to play funeral, and they would not.

There was no pleasing them. They just would not play. There are plenty of children to-day like them.

10. They were just as hard to please as the sulky children. John preached to them, and they criticised his personal habits, because he would neither eat bread nor drink wine. They said he was crazy, and was not worthy of confidence. Jesus preached to them, and they criticised him, because he both ate their food and drank their wine and mingled with the common people. They said he was no better than any one else, and was not worthy of their confidence. There was no pleasing them, because they did not want to be pleased. In such a mood of resistance the people had no difficulty in finding excuses for their hostility.

11. The fact that John had felt the same suspicions as to Jesus' nature which his own friends and acquaintances felt, undoubtedly influenced Jesus a great deal in his final decision.

12. Jesus had the highest regard for John. He trusted his judgment and honored his motives and admired his fearlessness. He looked upon him somewhat as a disciple looks upon a master.

Picture, Christ the Remunerator, by Scheffer; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 591.)

XVIII. Making Enemies.

1. The Publicans were the tax-gatherers of the nation. The system of collecting taxes which Rome adopted with her colonies was what is known as tax farming. Rome estimated that a certain country ought to pay a certain amount of taxes. She then entrusted the task of raising this amount to her officials with the understanding that they could keep whatever they managed to collect above this amount for their own pay. These officials were known as Publicans, and of course it was to their interest to tax their districts as heavily as they could, because everything they raised over the stipulated amount

went into their own pockets. Matthew, one of the disciples, was a Publican.

2. The people, as a whole, regarded them with hatred and suspicion. They were not only visible reminders of the hated Roman sovereignty, but they were quite apt to be greedy and extortionate in their dealings. They faced great temptations to be extortionate, because the result of their extortion went into their own pockets. Hence they were classed with sinners.

3. It was the poor people, the Publicans and sinners, the oppressed and down-trodden, the social outcasts, who were especially attracted to Jesus. It was among these people that he best loved to work.

4. They immediately expressed their surprise that one who professed to be a prophet and a moral reformer should consent to sit at meals with such undesirable company. Jesus lowered himself in their shallow estimation by this practice. They argued that a man is known by the company he keeps, and that therefore he could not be so trustworthy a man as he pretended to be.

5. The Scribes and Pharisees were famous sects or religious parties, composed of the better educated and more influential men of the nation. They were conservative, self-righteous, and hostile to any change. It was inevitable that Christ, with his searching innovations of thought and teaching, should encounter the bitter opposition of these classes. The Scribes corresponded roughly as a class to our lawyers, except that the laws with which they dealt and which they interpreted were the Mosaic laws of the Pentateuch. The Pharisees were another great religious party, who insisted upon strict literal obedience to the Mosaic law as the only condition of salvation. They were painstaking formalists, and were therefore open to the criticism of hypocrisy which Jesus so often brought against them. We must remember that these classes were, in fact, the backbone of Jewish society. They were well-educated, scrupulously moral, and self-respecting. Jesus was obliged to encounter the worst and most obstinate side of their nature. Hence his unsparing criticism.

6. Jesus replied simply that of course he ate with Publi-

cans and sinners. He had come to redeem just such people from their sinful ways. He was a physician, and must naturally find his work not among the well, but among the sick. There is a great deal of sarcasm in his retort.

7. The Son of David was simply another name or title for the expected Messiah. According to popular fancy the coming Messiah would be a descendant of the great King David, and would revive the ancient glory of David's reign. This is why Matthew and Luke both take such pains to trace the ancestry of Jesus back to David.

8. Beelzebub was another name for the king of the lower world, who is also called Satan, or the Devil, or the Prince of Darkness. When the Pharisees saw Jesus casting out a demon, they immediately sought to discredit his influence with the common people by saying that he was in league with Beelzebub, and that therefore he had power over demons.

9. The Pharisees were perpetually trying to catch him in his talk, trying to lead him on to say something which they could pick up and use against him, so that they might destroy his influence with the people or might even bring him to trial for heresy or treason. One such attempt we have in Matthew xxii. 15-22. There are many other similar attempts recorded for us in the Gospel.

10. After a few words of flattery they ask him if he considers it lawful to pay tribute to Rome. This was a very sly question. For, if he should answer, Yes, he would immediately lose his standing with the common people, who in their bitter prejudice against Rome would turn indignantly against any one who upheld the Roman sovereignty and the Roman tribute as being lawful. But, if he said No, he would be guilty of speaking treason against Rome, and they could have him arrested by the Roman authorities as a seditionist.

11. Jesus saw at once what a dangerous question this was, and how crafty and malicious was the purpose in asking it. He asks to see a coin, and, pointing to the image on the coin, he reminds them that it is Cæsar's property. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." The meaning is that Cæsar commands their

temporal allegiance, while God commands their spiritual allegiance. There need be no interference. They can be faithful to both. It is surprising to note with what constant shrewdness and watchfulness Jesus guards himself against such crafty malice. They never succeed in catching him. He is always too sharp for them.

12. No man can be great in an imperfect world without making enemies. Instances are countless. In our own history we can mention George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, William Lloyd Garrison, and many others.

Picture, *The Tribute Money*, by Titian; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 126.)

XIX. The Fate of John The Baptist.

1. With the superstition of a guilty and violent nature, Herod thought at once that the fearless prophet, John the Baptist, whom he had beheaded, had come to life again, and was preaching in the person of Jesus. This is another indication of the similarity that existed in work and in temperament between Jesus and John. It is to be regretted that we do not know more about John.

2. The last seventeen books of the Old Testament preserve for us the names and labors of the great prophets of Israel. These men lived from the eighth to the fourth centuries before Christ, and left an indelible impress upon the religious and political thought of the nation. They were not prophets in the modern sense of prophesiers. They were statesmen and preachers. The Jews owed more to them than to either kings or priests, for they were the ones who moulded and guided the moral temper of the nation. Mr. John Sargent's painting of the prophets in the Boston Public Library is worth showing the children.

3. John had denounced Herod's marriage with his step-niece, as being a guilty and unlawful marriage. Not so much through resentment as through fear of the popular wrath

which John's criticism might arouse, and because of the vindictiveness of his wife Herodias, Herod had imprisoned John.

4. It would seem that Herod not only feared John for his strength and integrity, but even admired him and was glad to hear him preach. In all this Herod was evidently actuated by the strong-minded Herodias, who was evidently a prototype of Lady Macbeth.

5. According to the usual custom he gave a great feast to the officers of his household and to the prominent men of the neighborhood.

6. Josephus tells us that her name was Salome. She added to the festivities by coming into the room after the dishes were removed and executing one of the barbarous dances of the times for the amusement of Herod and his guests.

7. Herod, flushed with wine and excited by much flattery, promised his step-daughter that he would give her as a reward anything she might ask up to a half of his kingdom.

8. Salome's choice took an unexpected turn. She requested as her reward the head of John the Baptist, who was at that moment lying in prison in the palace.

9. Salome had been put up to make this request by her terrible mother, Herodias. Herodias was quick to see and to grasp this chance for getting rid of the man she so bitterly hated and feared.

10. The request sobered him immediately. He would have gotten out of his promise if it were possible, but he had given his word in the hearing of his guests, and pride and shame both prevented his breaking it. He therefore sent a messenger of his guard with instructions to have John beheaded forthwith, and the head was brought to Salome, as she had requested, in a charger. Josephus tells us that this murder of John the Baptist created intense excitement and aroused universal indignation. Several years after this Herod was overwhelmingly defeated in a battle with the Arabian king, and according to popular notions his defeat was the just punishment for his murder of John the Baptist.

11. The disciples of John, faithful and loyal to the last, came, and bore away his body and laid it in a tomb. A similar

act was to be performed for Jesus himself. It shows us something of the intimacy and the loyal fidelity which existed between the group of disciples and their Master. It was a very sweet and strong relationship.

12. In the Fortress of Machærus, where Herod spent a good part of the year and where John had been in prison.

Picture, Head of John the Baptist in a Charger, by Guido Reni; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 82.)

XX. A Fugitive.

1. The probability is that Jesus did not know the real reasons for the death of John. He supposed that John had been killed on account of his radical teachings, and, being conscious of the great similarity between his own work and that of John, he supposed naturally that the fate that had overtaken John would be his own fate. He therefore felt himself in danger. He was preaching just the thing that John had preached. He was stirring up just the sort of popular feeling that John had stirred up. If they killed John, it would be only logical in them to want to kill him.

2. Certain Pharisees came to him, and warned him to leave the country because, as they said, Herod was seeking to kill him. This might have been merely an attempt on the part of the Pharisees to frighten him out of the country and so get rid of him. If so, the attempt succeeded temporarily, for Jesus was not yet ready to die, and he was convinced that the country was unsafe for him.

3. He called Herod "that fox." This Herod was Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great. He was tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. Like his father, he was a great builder, having built entirely the city of Tiberias on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. In character he was rather weak and not entirely trustworthy. The term "fox" fits him exactly. He was cunning and crafty.

4. Jesus withdrew to the ports of Tyre and Sidon, cities which were outside of the tetrarchy of Herod. Here Herod could

not touch him, and here he might abide in safety until he had decided his problem and was ready to face his fate.

5. The Canaanitish woman asked him to cast a demon out of her little girl.

6. At first Jesus made no reply whatever to this request. When the woman repeated her request, he replied that he had been sent to serve none but the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He meant by this that it was only the sinners and the sufferers among his own nation of Jews who had a rightful claim upon his services.

7. When the woman repeated her request the third time, he replied that it was not fitting to take the meat which had been prepared for the children and give it to the dogs. He meant by this that he could hardly feel justified in using the strength and the skill with which God had endowed him for the benefit of outsiders. God had sent him to serve the nation of Israel. To neglect Israel and serve any one of a foreign nation would be a breach of trust. In this incident we may see the strong racial instinct which characterized all pious Jews, and of which Jesus had his full share. He believed, as all his countrymen believed, that his nation was especially marked out to be the favored nation of God. He believed that the coming Messiah would be a Jewish Messiah, that he would establish a kingdom of heaven which should be a Jewish kingdom, and that he would receive into his kingdom none but Jews, and none but the repentant and upright Jews. With these firm convictions it very naturally seemed to him a misappropriation of his time and strength to render service to people who were not Jews. For these reasons he had first hesitated to grant the request of the Canaanitish woman. He was torn between his strong racial prejudice and his human sympathy. The whole incident is a foreshadowing of the great problem which perplexed the apostles after his death. Was Christianity to be nothing more than a sect of the Jewish Church, or might it be given to the Gentiles as well? The disciple James took one view, and the great apostle Paul made himself a notorious champion of the other view, that Gentiles might enter the Christian Church.

8. The woman answered him in the terms of his own analogy. She reminded him that sometimes the dogs licked up the crumbs that fell from the children's table and which the children themselves did not want. This was equivalent to saying that, when there were no grateful children of Israel to profit by his services, it could do no harm to let an occasional outsider enjoy the benefit of those services. The woman's entire humility, her unquestioning faith in Christ's power to help her, and her unmistakable anxiety in behalf of her daughter conspired to overcome Christ's prejudice. In a warm rush of feeling he gave her his answer: "Woman, be it done unto thee even as thou wilt."

9. Tyre and Sidon were inhabited by what the Jews called Gentiles (Canaanites, Greeks, Syrians, Phoenicians) and large numbers of Jews as well.

10. It is not that Christ feared any vengeful act which Herod might commit. His physical courage a few months later shows us clearly that he was not afraid on account of the suffering or even the death which might be in store for him. But he had not as yet made up his mind as to his own mission, and did not wish to have his hand forced. He withdrew from Herod's jurisdiction simply to gain time, so that he might solve his problem, undisturbed by the pressure of external danger.

11. There was a bare possibility that Herod in his superstitious terror, thinking Jesus was simply John come to life again, might attempt to arrest him and kill him. It seems pretty certain, however, that the danger was more imaginary than real. We know that Christ was ignorant of the true circumstances of John's death, of the part which Herodias played, and thus was led to credit Herod with motives which he did not possess.

12. This journey which he took might have been one of about a hundred miles, and might have occupied several weeks.

Picture, The Canaanitish Woman, by Palma Vecchio; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 86.)

XXI. Deciding the Problem.

1. Cæsarea Philippi was a little village on the head waters of the Jordan River, about forty miles north of Capernaum. It was in the extreme northern part of the country of the Jews.

2. The whole incident is tremendously dramatic, and represents in fact the greatest crisis in the life of Jesus. Without warning of any kind, Jesus suddenly refers to a subject which had been uppermost in the minds of the disciples for some months, but which they had not been allowed to openly discuss. He asked them, "Who do men say that I am?" We can only imagine how the question surprised them, just as it would surprise anybody to hear some man, of his own accord, broach the subject that was dearest to his heart and that he had never permitted anybody to discuss.

3. Jesus repeatedly speaks of himself as the Son of Man. It was his own favorite name for himself.

4. In their embarrassment and surprise they began to give timid answers to his question. "Some say you are John the Baptist; some say you are Elijah; others say you are Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

5. Jesus was determined to have their opinion. They were his closest friends, and, if he could find corroboration for his opinion anywhere, he must find it in their judgment. So he persistently puts the question directly to them,—“Who say ye that I am?”

6. This second question creates another embarrassed pause. None of the disciples dared to say the tremendous thing that was in his mind. It remained for the headstrong one, Simon Peter, to burst out impulsively, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Knowing what we do of Peter, it is just like him to make this answer. It was almost the only instance where Peter's natural impulsiveness does not offend us, but wins our warm approbation.

7. We must simply imagine that Peter sprang to his feet with flashing eyes and ringing voice and a manner wholly surcharged with the enthusiasm of his conviction. It was an

intensely dramatic moment,—Jesus, quiet, self-assured, self-contained, as one who had made up his mind, seated in the midst of the group; the disciples about him, tense with interest and expectation; and Peter, transported by his excitement, pointing directly at Jesus and uttering his fateful words.

8. For the first time Jesus did not rebuke or deny Peter's assertion. He looked quietly upon his impulsive friend, and fervently approved his words. "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonas." It was as much as to say: You are right, Simon. I commend your insight. I am the Christ, the Son of the living God. In other words, Christ for the first time definitely accepts and assumes in open council the name and office of Messiah. The long weeks of doubt and perplexity are at an end. The voice of God speaks clear and distinct, telling him his duty. His mind is made up. He is the nation's Christ.

9. It is evident from these words that the question of his Messianic character had not been a matter for open discussion. Peter had come to his decision through his own thought and intuition. The Father in heaven had revealed it unto Peter, even as he had unto Christ.

10. Christ at once began to prepare his disciples for the cruel and disappointing fate which, he knew, was in store for him. He told them that they must now go at once to Jerusalem, which was the capital of the nation, and where the nation's Messiah must necessarily make his official entry, and that there he must suffer the ridicule, the hostility, the hatred of the Scribes and Priests, and must even be killed.

11. It required no miraculous gift of foresight in Christ to know what his fate would be. He saw that he would be accounted a false Christ, an imposter, a blasphemer, by the leading men of the nation, because he could not be the kind of Christ they expected. The fact that he was nothing but a poor carpenter from the peasant class of Galilee, coming to them with none of the accessories and credentials which they were confident that their Messiah would bring, would be sufficient to prevent their believing in him. Instead of accepting him, they would mock and ridicule his claims, and

finally lay upon him the fatal charge of blasphemy, which was a crime punishable by death. It was all perfectly plain to Jesus.

12. Peter, in his mistaken generosity, began to deny that these prophecies of Christ would ever come to pass. Peter unwittingly touched Christ in a particularly tender spot. Christ naturally shrank from the shame and suffering which he knew he must undergo. In considering the problem, he had seen with increasing clearness that it was a God-given duty that he should accept the office of Messiah; but the duty was attended by a terrible fate, from which his inclination urged him to escape. It had been a struggle between duty and inclination, in which duty had at last nobly conquered. But inclination was not wholly dead. It still spoke its warning, and urged him to find security from that awful fate. Peter had revived the struggle for the moment by denying that his Master must suffer and perish. It was almost with a feeling of self-distrust that Christ turned upon him, and sharply rebuked him for his words. It was almost as if Christ had said: "Peter, that matter is settled. I have accepted my fatal duty. I have reconciled myself to the consequences. By expressing hopes of my security you are simply throwing in my path the temptation to yield to inclination and deny my duty." Thus we see the sharpness of his rebuke was an indication of his own fear that he might yield to the temptation which Peter's words revived in his heart.

Picture, Christ giving Keys to Saint Peter, by Guido Reni; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 87.)

XXII. A Rift of Light.

1. To the summit of some neighboring mountain. 2. He took with him Peter, James, and John. This James is James the son of Zebedee, the brother of John.

3. These three were the three more intimate of Jesus' disciples. It would seem that he was in somewhat closer touch with these three than with the others. They were evidently

men of a quicker sympathy and a deeper intelligence than their companions, and were thus better qualified to understand him and to share something of his inner hopes and fears. Upon several occasions of an especially private or intimate nature he asks these three to accompany him,—for example, when he heals the daughter of Jairus, in Mark v. 22-43, and also when he retired into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, just before his arrest, in Matthew xxvi. 36. Of these three, John, the younger son of Zebedee, was his especial favorite. He was the disciple whom Jesus loved.

4. A man is transfigured when his outer appearance is entirely changed. We sometimes say that a person's face is transfigured when, as the result of some inner emotion, the expression is wholly changed.

5. In Christ's case we are told that his transfiguration showed itself in his face, which "did shine as the sun," and in his garments, which "became white as the light." It is evidently a crude way of describing the outward effects of the emotion of inner exaltation through which Jesus was passing.

6. Peter was so carried away by the peacefulness and beauty of the moment that he wished to stay there always. He suggested that he should build three huts for Jesus and his two divine guests.

7. The voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

8. To the sympathetic reader it is sufficiently clear that in this crude story of the transfiguration we have an effort to describe the inner peace and serenity that filled the heart of Christ, and that came to him as a result of his having recently passed through the great moral crisis of his life. The scene at Cæsarea Philippi had taken place only six days before. At that time he had definitely and openly avowed his purpose of obeying the voice of God which spoke in his heart. He had chosen to keep himself true to the duty which God offered him, even though it entailed the greatest sacrifice a man could make. He had passed victoriously through the greatest moral struggle of his life. And now he knew himself to be doomed: he knew himself also true to his conscience and true to his sense of duty.

Such victories are invariably attended by a feeling of inner peace and contentment which nothing can destroy. In the transfiguration, with its light and its radiance and its celestial voice, we doubtless have merely the outward hint and token of this inward peace and contentment which flooded his soul.

9. Upon the occasion of his baptism, at which time he came victoriously through another moral crisis. (See Lesson VII.)

10. There was a poor peasant who had brought his demoniacal son to be healed. He was surrounded by the other nine disciples, each of whom had tried in vain to relieve the sufferer.

11. Because, as Jesus said, they lacked faith. They had no self-confidence. They had not sufficient trust in the power which they themselves were striving to put forth. Such men seldom succeed in anything that they attempt.

12. Of course not. The utterance is simply another instance of hyperbole, a figure of speech to which, as we have seen, he was very much addicted. All Jesus meant was that faith, self-confidence, thorough assurance in the right and power of God, would help a man do things which would otherwise be impossible. This has amply been borne out in actual history. Many a forlorn hope has been pushed through to victory by the indomitable faith of its supporters. There is nothing so contagious as faith.

Picture, The Transfiguration, by Raphael; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 89.)

XXIII. The First Temptation.

1. The Spirit led him into the wilderness. The land of Palestine is full of wildernesses, as we have seen, and it was into one of the wildernesses near the Dead Sea that, according to the Gospel, Jesus was led. The whole event is probably an inner spiritual experience that took place in Christ's own heart and that he related to his disciples in the form of a parable. The accounts in the Gospels of his temptation are in all probability the remnants of this parable, preserving for us the material persons and places and accessories out of which the parable was originally built.

2. The purpose of the errand was that he might undergo sundry temptations, as though the Christ were not entirely fitted for his labors until he had survived the test of Satan's allurements.

3. He fasted forty days and forty nights. If the account is a parable referring to a spiritual experience, the fasting forty days and forty nights would of course mean that he passed through an indefinite period of spiritual hunger and doubt and perplexity.

4. The numeral forty is used repeatedly in Old and New Testaments to mean simply an indefinite number. Our idiom to express the same thought is "several, scores, hundreds, dozens." For example, the Israelites spent forty years in the wilderness, which means simply that they spent an indefinite number of years in the wilderness.

5. The tempter suggested that he turn the stones into bread, in order to satisfy his hunger. We must be careful to get at the true temptation under the concrete forms and figures of the parable. To use this Messianic power to turn stones into bread typifies the temptation to use his Messianic power to transmute the harsh facts and conditions of the life about him into forces that would redound to his own selfish gain and his own personal profit. This, then, was a temptation to apply his Messianic power to his own private advantage.

6. Jesus replied, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," meaning, of course, that a man's true welfare does not depend so much upon personal fame and private wealth as upon fidelity to every word of the voice of God as it speaks in his own conscience. Fidelity to the voice of God was the strongest and noblest trait in the heart of Christ. The world has never seen a more conscientious man. It was the secret of all his happiness. In his transfiguration we have seen how it yielded him its ineffably precious reward. It was this love for God, this desire to fulfil the will of God which was so strong in him, that took him safely through his first temptation.

7. The Gospels all agree in putting his temptations immediately after his baptism at the hands of John. And yet it is

difficult to see how they could have come then. They were temptations to misuse his Messianic power, and, as we have seen, his Messianic power did not become a self-recognized reality until the scene at Cæsarea Philippi. It could not have been until after that scene that he suffered the temptation.

8. No. The wilderness into which he was led was a mood of doubt and perplexity, the darkness and dreariness of which is accurately typified by the word "wilderness."

9. Of course, it was not a personal presence with visible and audible voice. "Satan" means simply the sinful impulse of suggestion which spoke in his heart, as it often speaks in ours.

10. He had just taken upon himself the name and office and the infinite power of God's Messiah. Jesus believed that as God's Messiah he was gifted with a power, and with an immunity from natural law, the extent of which he himself did not realize and the reality of which he did not doubt. So sure was he of the spirit of God working through him, and of himself as the human agent and messenger of that spirit of God, that he really believed he could turn stones into bread at a word of command. His faith in himself and in the God whose son he was, and whose power dwelt in him, was too exuberant, too generous and whole-souled, to permit of any doubts or reservations as to this matter. God is omnipotent, and he was the Son of God. Of course, he would share God's power. To doubt this would be an act of unfaith.

11. This power had been given to him, that by it he might accomplish the work of God's Messiah. Not himself, but his fellow-countrymen, must be the real beneficiaries of this power.

12. He would have been faithless to his God. God had trusted him, and because of that trust had given him this wonderful power, believing that he would use it as God desired him to use it. To use it for another purpose would be to betray God's trust, precisely as though a man should be given a sum of money to use in charity, and should use it for something else. We call this sin "misappropriation of power."

Picture, Temptation of Christ, by Scheffer; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 44.)

XXIV. The Second Temptation.

1. Matthew tells us that the second temptation was the one which took place on the pinnacle of the temple, where Jesus was tempted to cast himself down.

2. In the Luke version this temptation comes third.

3. We must be careful to remember the allegorical nature of this account. We cannot think that Satan actually took him to Jerusalem. The thought occurred to him as a very crafty temptation to go to Jerusalem, and there give this exhibition of his supernatural immunity from the ordinary laws of nature. For such an exhibition the temple at Jerusalem would be the logical place, because of the great crowds of people, especially the Rabbis and Priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, who would witness the feat. It was from these people that Jesus desired to secure recognition, because they were the influential members of the State.

4. There was but one temple in the country, built upon Mount Zion in the city of Jerusalem. Almost every town had its synagogue, where religious instruction might be given. But a formal act of worship could be done only in the temple at Jerusalem.

5. The height might have been 30 or 40 feet. Leaping from this pinnacle, he would descend directly into the stone-paved court below, thronged with loiterers, passers-by, and worshippers. His action would thus have as much publicity as it would have anywhere.

6. Satan reminded him that he was the Son of God, and thus immune from the ordinary laws which would render such an action fatal to a common man. He assured him that God's angels would have charge of him, and would bear him up in their hands before he struck the stones.

7. From Psalm xci. 11 and 12 and from Deuteronomy vi. 16.

8. Yes. As we have seen, his trust in God and in himself as the Son of God was too thorough and implicit to permit of any reservations or uncertainties. He believed God to be infinite in power. Why, then, should he not believe that he

might safely perform such an act as this, when he knew that he was the Messiah of God?

9. The effect would be to establish his reputation at once beyond all shadow or possibility of doubt as the Christ of God. He would at once have the entire recognition of every soul in the nation, and would be able to prosecute his work as Messiah of the nation without any sort of hindrance or opposition, such as might arise, and in fact did arise, from the scepticism and incredulity of the more influential classes.

10. A sign used in this sense is simply a credential, a proof of his true Messianic character. When the angel told the shepherds on the fields of Bethlehem that the Son of David was born in the town of Bethlehem, he said that it would be a sign to them that they would find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes and lying in a manger. The shepherds found that the angel had prophesied correctly, and the correctness of the prophecy was supposed to be a sign, a proof that the angel was right. When Moses appeared before Pharaoh, claiming to be a messenger from Jehovah and demanding that Pharaoh should release the children of Israel, he was vested with the power of turning his staff into a serpent. His ability to do that was supposed to be a sign in Pharaoh's eyes that he was in truth Jehovah's messenger, and had a right to make such a demand. The Pharisees were perpetually asking Jesus to give them a sign, by which they might satisfy themselves that his claim of being the Messiah was a just claim, and that he was worthy of their confidence.

11. As we have seen, the Pharisees asked him for a sign that they might set at rest their doubts and hesitation as to his claim. In their eyes it was not enough that he should rest such a claim upon the purity of his motives or upon his burning desire to help and save the nation. The Messiah whom they expected must be a heavenly being and endowed with heavenly powers. They asked him to give them some proof or token of his heavenly power, and then they would accept him at once. To leap unharmed from the pinnacle of the temple would be just such a sign as they wanted, and would secure at once their full recognition of him as Christ.

12. Jesus resisted this temptation repeatedly because he felt that no true Christ would secure for himself a recognition by tawdry and dramatic means. In his own mind his Christ-hood was based upon true motives and helpfulness and service, and upon a true sense of intimacy with his Heavenly Father. Unless he could be recognized by these true tokens and upon this real ground, he preferred to do without recognition. We see in him a very lofty sense of his divine character and mission, and a jealous determination to guard his character and mission from all possible taint of cheapness.

Picture, *The Temptation*, by Hofmann; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 45.)

XXV. The Third Temptation.

1. To the summit of a high mountain. Most pictures of the temptation are painted to illustrate this last temptation, and represent Jesus and the tempter upon the summit of the mountain.

2. Satan showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof. It is probable that Christ's conception of the world was very meagre and inadequate. As a matter of fact, Christ could not have seen a landscape of more than ten or fifteen miles' radius from the highest mountain in the country, and his notion of earthly power could not have extended much beyond that.

3. Satan proposed to make him ruler of all this extent, if Jesus would fall down and worship him. That is to say, Satan offered him great temporal authority and power, great influence and opportunity to be employed in noble and helpful efforts, if only he would abate something of the uncompromising loftiness of his ambitions and be satisfied to pursue an ideal something less than his best and highest ideal. This is a very common temptation, and one which has troubled almost everybody. Very often immediate temporal success may be obtained if a man will be satisfied to work for an end that represents something less than the very best and highest end of

which he is capable. Unflinching fidelity to one's best and highest ideals frequently leads to apparent failure and ruin. "Shall I work for the best and seem to fail, or shall I work for something less than my best, something that is still good, and apparently succeed?" This is the problem that troubles a great many people. This is the essence of Christ's third temptation. By bowing down to worship Satan, by making some slight concession in the loftiness and purity of his ideal, he might secure the semblance of immediate success.

4. Jesus bade Satan depart, telling him that he was commanded to serve God and God alone, no matter what that service might be. In other words, he refused to degrade his ideal of faithful service even for the sake of success.

5. Judging from the passage in John, Jesus not only could have been king, but was almost taken by force and made king. There is no question but what he might have headed a considerable insurrection of the peasants, and won for himself a certain transient notoriety. He might possibly have founded a little kingdom of a few thousand souls in some obscure little retreat. The important thing is to remember not so much what he might actually have done as what he believed he could do. He unquestionably believed that he could be a king if he wished. His temptation is to be measured not by actual possibilities, but rather by what he believed were his possibilities.

6. He might have inaugurated a reign of justice and mercy and peace. He might have rectified the political and social corruptions which he so heartily deplored. In short, he might have done a vast amount of real, practical good to hundreds of grateful people.

7. Not very extensive, perhaps; in fact, hardly greater than the region of Galilee with which he was so familiar and in which he counted so many friends.

8. Judged from all practical and outward standards of right and wrong, there could not have been anything downright sinful in his yielding to this temptation. The results of his choice would have been beneficial to his fellow-men. The tragedy would have consisted in his own self-betrayal, in his

renouncing his highest ideal of service and espousing one a little lower than his best.

9. He was too true to himself to be satisfied with any ideal that was less than his best. He would make no compromise or concession of his own truest manhood even for the sake of doing much real and immediate good. He must serve God entirely, and God alone.

10. It was the hardest temptation of them all, because it offered him a comparatively easy and successful way of doing the good which it was his passion to do. When Satan offered him a chance to do some good, he approached him in his weakest spot, for there was nothing which he so longed to do as to help his fellow-men.

11. One-fifth of the population of the world bears his name and proudly acknowledges his guidance in life. Hardly a nation but what contains his followers and feels his influence either directly or indirectly.

12. Because he was unfailingly true to his own best self, and to the true voice of God which spoke in his heart. The world never forgets the man who is faithful to himself, even through shame and failure and ruin. The world is always glad to acknowledge the leadership of such men, and such men, in high ways or in humble, never fail in the long run to secure their full recognition.

Picture, Christ Tempted by Satan, by Cornicelius; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 547.)

XXVI. Starting for Jerusalem.

1. Jerusalem was the capital of the nation, and no event of national importance, such as the coming of the Messiah, could take place anywhere but in that city. Jesus might have escaped his death by simply keeping away from Jerusalem, but to do so would be to deny his Messianic character. If he honestly believed himself to be the Messiah, he must announce himself as such in the city of Jerusalem.

2. He saw very distinctly that, when he told them down in Jerusalem that he was the Christ, they would not believe him.

Instead they would declare him to be an imposter and would charge him with blasphemy for pretending to be the Christ of God. According to the law of Moses, blasphemy was a capital offense. The punishment was death by stoning. Jesus knew that he would be charged with this crime, and that this punishment would be inflicted upon him.

3. Probably a very few weeks. He seems to have returned to Capernaum for a few days after the scene in Cæsarea Philippi. It could not have been for more than a last farewell of his home. After a few simple arrangements had been made, he gathered his friends about him and started for Jerusalem.

4. He crossed the Jordan River at one of the fords just south of the Sea of Galilee, and followed the road that ran along the eastern bank of that stream, through the region of Perea.

5. The Gentiles to whom he would be delivered and who would crucify him were the Romans, who were masters of Palestine and whose governor and legionaries were stationed in the country to oversee the proper administration of the province. The Jews called all foreigners Gentiles. The world was divided into two great classes, Jews and Gentiles. To be put to death by Gentiles was simply another little touch of shame in the bitter and shameful fate which was awaiting him.

6. The Priests and Scribes would much prefer to try him in their own Jewish courts and punish him by their own Jewish punishment, which was, as we have seen, stoning him to death. But the Jews were no longer an independent people. They were under the Roman law, and it must be by Roman officers that their culprits were tried and by the Roman punishment that they were punished. The Roman punishment for capital offenses was crucifixion. It was a peculiarly painful form of death. It consisted of lashing or nailing the victim to a rough cross and planting the cross upright, and leaving him there to perish in the course of three or four days of hunger and exhaustion and pain.

7. The disciples did not understand why the Christ of God with all his superhuman power should undergo such a

fate as Jesus foretold. In spite of his own warnings they had no expectation whatever of his suffering this fate. If he were rejected by the nation after he had made his claim, they expected that he would call upon his superhuman resources and enforce his claim. Jesus was absolutely without any adequate sympathy in all his terrible fears and misgivings from this time on to his death.

8. As soon as Jesus had announced himself the nation's Christ, the humble-minded disciples had begun to wonder how this development would affect them personally. They knew they were his best friends. They naturally supposed that they would be given some share in the glory which he was about to assume. Just how this glory would be divided among them was somewhat uncertain, and was the cause of more than one dispute. It was over this point, as to which one of them would be given the greatest honor and the greatest prominence now that their Master was the Christ of God, that they were quarreling when Christ asked them his question, "What were ye reasoning in the way?"

9. He set a little child among them as an object-lesson, and warned them that, unless they could humble themselves sufficiently to help and serve one such little child, they would have no place in the kingdom of heaven. Christ's idea of greatness was simple human service. In his mind the truest and humblest servant of man was greatest in the eyes of God. He did all in his power to dislodge from their minds the idea that greatness depended upon or was indicated by earthly pomp or state or circumstance. He strove to give them his own ideal of greatness through humble, helpful, loving service to all God's creatures.

10. Twice at least, once as a boy of twelve and once as a young man, when he was baptized by John. He may have attended a Passover Feast once or twice in addition to these two visits, but we have no definite reference to such visits.

11. The probability is that there were few, if any, people who would know him either by person or reputation. He had lived a quiet life in Galilee, and down in Jerusalem he was virtually an entire stranger.

12. At the time of the annual Passover Feast, when the little city would be crowded with visitors and when his announcement of himself as the nation's Messiah would have the promptest and widest publicity that was possible.

Picture, Fishing-boat on the Sea of Tiberias; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 308.)

XXVII. The Journey.

1. A company of little children were brought to him one day, that he might lay his hands upon them and bless them.

2. The disciples rebuked them, and tried to send them away. The disciples considered themselves something like a body-guard to Jesus, whose duty it was to shield him from troublesome interruptions and from undesirable intruders.

3. The disciples thought they would simply annoy him, and that the Christ of God would have no time to squander upon them. In their eyes it was almost a lowering of his dignity to pay any attention to such humble applicants. It all goes to show how little they really understood him and how little they shared his ideal of service.

4. Jesus rebuked the disciples for rebuking them, in words that have become famous for their loving tenderness: "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me."

5. One of the clearest traits in Jesus' character was his love for little children. He felt for them not merely love, but something akin to reverence. In their freshness and innocence they were little reflections of God's own purity, containing in themselves unsuspected possibilities of good or evil which would be developed by the influences of human life and human companionship. The task of developing all that is good in them was to Jesus a sacred task. The danger of developing aught that was bad in them was to him a terrible danger. There was nothing that a man could do which would so promptly bring down upon him the wrath of Heaven as to give some offense or put some stumbling-block in the way of the true growth of a little child. This acute sense of respon-

sibility to little children and this sense of reverence for little children, which were so strong in Jesus, are characteristic of every good and great-hearted man. Countless instances of this trait might be named from among the world's greatest and noblest men and women.

6. The young man asked him what good thing he must do in order to inherit eternal life. In the Luke version this young man is called a ruler. All three Gospels agree that he was a man of wealth and influence. It must have seemed unusual to have a man of this class so deeply concerned over his spiritual welfare as to come and kneel before Jesus and ask such a question as this.

7. Jesus replied by referring him to the famous laws of his nation, especially the Ten Commandments. But with these the young man was wholly familiar. He had grown up under their guidance. It was no virtue in him that he obeyed them, for he had been trained from youth to obey them. It entailed no moral effort on his part to obey them, for he knew no other line of action. His rectitude of life had been secured at the cost of no moral struggle. He felt the need of some moral struggle in order to secure eternal life. He had done nothing himself and felt that he ought to do something. This was his lack, and so he replied, "All these things have I done: what lack I yet?"

8. Jesus understood him at once. He saw that what the young man wanted was a chance to exercise his moral choice and his moral strength. Jesus therefore told him to do something which would entail real moral effort and self-denial. "Go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor; and come and follow me."

9. The young man turned away, sorrowful, refusing to follow Jesus' instructions because of the very greatness of his possessions. Jesus had asked him to do more than he was able to do. His opportunities for winning eternal life were so great that they stood in his way. He was ready to make some self-denial and some effort, but his malformed sense of proportion prevented his making the self-denial and the effort that were necessary. Many people, like him, are willing

to devote their surplus energies and their surplus resources to the task of serving God and following Christ and winning eternal life, but, when they are asked to devote all their energies and resources to that holy enterprise, they are unable to obey.

10. Of course not. This is simply another instance of Christ's use of hyperbole. Christ meant that it was exceedingly difficult for a rich man to turn his thoughts from his worldly riches to his hopes of heaven.

11. Not at all. There are scholars who maintain that Jesus was the poor man's champion, that there was something almost akin to what we call Socialism in his teachings. This view seems more or less justified by the impression of Christ which we get in the Gospel of Luke. It is hard, however, to think that a man of such profound and unerring thought, who laid such stress upon the spirit as against the outward form and circumstance, should harbor any prejudices whatever that were based upon outward states and conditions. The rich man in whose heart there lived a true spirit of teachableness and service was as dear to him as the poor man in whom there dwelt the same spirit.

12. Riches to him were simply a tremendous opportunity for true and profitable living. If they were used as an opportunity, they were good; but, if their true use as an opportunity was overlooked and they were cultivated as a sufficient end in themselves and for their own sake, then they became a stumbling-block.

Picture, Jesus and the Child, by Ballheim; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 97.)

XXVIII. Dark Forebodings.

1. He prophesied that, when they got to Jerusalem, he would be delivered to the Scribes and Priests, and would be mocked and scourged and shamefully treated and handed over to the Gentiles and crucified.

2. Not in the least. They could not understand what he meant by such prophecies.

3. They expected that he would enter Jerusalem, claiming to be the Messiah, that his claim would be denied by the influential men, but conceded by the common people, that he might be arrested on the charge of blasphemy at the instigation of the Priests, and put in a position of bodily peril, but that before his life was actually threatened he would call upon the celestial resources which as Messiah he had at his disposal, and would summon heavenly aid and overcome his enemies, and establish his kingdom in security and glory.

4. First of all, because he wished their sympathy. Jesus was bearing a great burden of anxiety, which was all the more burdensome because he was bearing it alone. If he could get them to understand the future fate which he so much dreaded, how inevitable it was and why he so persistently followed out that fate, they would give him what he most craved,—the encouragement and companionship of a truly understanding sympathy. The words of his prophecy are extremely pathetic because they are the words of a man who is calling for friendship and support.

5. He was driven to warn them of his fate, so that their own disappointment would not be too overwhelming. He knew perfectly well that they expected him to enjoy a far different fortune from that which he himself foresaw. He feared lest that actuality might undermine their faith in him, and the thought that they, his closest friends, might lose their faith in him was an unendurable thought. In order to prevent such a disaster, he strove to prepare them beforehand, so that, whatever happened to him, their faith in him might not fail.

6. Doubtless Jesus had in mind the passage in Isaiah lii. 13–liii. 12, also Psalm xxii.

7. Sympathy, as the word denotes, is “suffering with” or “feeling with.” As Dr. Parkhurst says, “Sympathy is two hearts tugging at one load.” There can be no sympathy unless there is perfect understanding. In order to sympathize with a friend, we must understand his situation, see life through his eyes, put ourselves in his place, and we shall then feel some of the emotions that he feels and share his hopes and fears, his joys and sorrows.

8. The disciples were very unsatisfactory in the quality of sympathy which they were able to give Jesus. They did not understand their Master. His motives were strange to them. It was far beyond their ability to comprehend his thoughts. This lack of understanding rendered them unable to truly sympathize.

9. It is not too much to say that their very faith in him prevented their understanding him. They were vaguely conscious of his great superiority to them. They looked upon him as a being far above them, a being of a different order, whose abilities and powers were to them unlimited. They accepted him heart and soul as the Christ of God, sharing God's power and sovereignty. They could not understand how such a being could be subject to earthly violence and opposition. Their very faith in him blinded their eyes to his limitations.

10. There was this constant anxiety dwelling like a dull pain at his heart, and making him sober and anxious-eyed and thoughtful. Back of the pain, however, there was the deep and permanent serenity which came from his conscious fidelity to his duty, and which nothing could destroy. In superficial ways therefore he was grave and care-worn. In deeper ways he was supremely and securely happy.

11. He was driven by his tyrannical sense of duty. It was the lesser of two evils. To go ahead would mean shame and suffering and death of the body. To go back would mean shame and suffering and death of the soul. Anything would be better than the agony of this spiritual self-betrayal. The choice was a hard one, but to a man like Jesus it was a perfectly plain one.

12. His constancy to God, his fidelity to the duty which God had given him, and his courage.

Picture, *Ecce Homo*, by Guido Reni; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 142.)

XXIX. Jericho.

1. The city of Jericho, which was right on his journey from Galilee through Perea to Jerusalem. Jericho is famous in Old Testament history for being the first city that was taken by the Israelites in Joshua's conquest of the land of Canaan. It is situated at the northern end of the Dead Sea, in the deepest and hottest part of the Jordan valley.

2. Zacchæus was a chief Publican; that is to say, he was a tax collector, who had in charge a large tax district, and who had other Publicans or tax collectors under him.

3. The crowd was so dense and Zacchæus was so small of stature that he could not see over people's heads to get a glimpse of Jesus.

4. He ran ahead along the road which he knew Jesus would follow, and clambered into the branches of a sycamore-tree. From this point of vantage he was able to get a good look at Jesus as he passed beneath. The sycamore-tree is also called a fig mulberry. It is a kind of fig-tree very common around Jericho.

5. Jesus, noticing Zacchæus and touched by his eagerness to see him, invited him to come down, and proposed that he be his host for that night. This the common people did not like because they did not want their prophet to stay at the house of a hated Publican. All Publicans were hated and mistrusted by the Jews, not only because of their extortionate practices, but also because they were visible emblems and reminders of the hated Roman sovereignty. Zacchæus, being a chief Publican, came in for more than his fair share of this popular hatred.

6. The prefix Bar means "son of," like the prefix Fitz. Bartimæus therefore means "son of Timæus."

7. Bartimæus was a blind beggar who sat by the roadside, soliciting alms. Notice the difference in the three versions of this story. Matthew says there were two beggars, whose names he does not give, and whom Jesus encountered as he was going out of Jericho. Mark says there was but one,

whose name he gives, and whom Jesus encountered as he was going out of Jericho. Luke says there was but one, whose name he does not give, and whom Jesus encountered as he was entering Jericho. The three versions undoubtedly refer to the same incident.

8. Being blind, he had to depend on his sense of hearing. He heard a great multitude going by, and asked who it was that attracted such a concourse of people. They told him it was Jesus of Nazareth. Some rumor of Jesus and of his wonderful ability had evidently reached the ears of the poor blind man, and had aroused in him the vague and indefinite hope that he might some day meet him. Here was his chance. Here was the very man in whose wonderful power lay his only hope of being cured. In a frenzy of excitement, fearing lest he might miss his chance, he began to call at the top of his lungs, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." His hope had strangely come true. He was determined not to let this opportunity slip through his fingers.

9. Instead of obeying the rebuke, he simply shouted yet more loudly, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." This opportunity meant more to him than people imagined. It would not be his fault if he failed to profit by it. His persistence is very touching and very attractive.

10. On the contrary, Jesus was touched by him. In another place (Matthew xi. 12) he tells his disciples that the kingdom of heaven may be taken by violence. In still another place (Luke xi. 5-10) he recommends his disciples to be importunate in demanding of God the blessings that they desire. Here was a poor blind beggar who was both violent and importunate in demanding a cure from Christ. We cannot help thinking that Jesus liked to be thus importuned, and that Bartimæus won his way to his heart by his faith in Christ's power and by his persistence in asking that power for himself.

11. Genesis xxxii. 24-26. Jacob wrestles with the angel, and will not release him until the angel gives him a blessing. There is here the same violence and importunity, the same insistence upon being helped. One of Christ's greatest dis-

couragements was the apparent lack on the part of people of a desire to be helped. This discouragement is by no means unknown to the modern reformer. The first thing to be done is to cultivate a recognition of our own shortcomings and a desire to have them rectified. Then, says Jesus, ask, seek, knock, demand God's help and grace, and keep on demanding, and God will grant your request.

12. Jericho is about eighteen miles from Jerusalem. It is a wild, dangerous road, infested then as now by robbers. It was a touch of genuine realism in Jesus to put the scene of the story of the good Samaritan upon the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Wayfarers frequently fell among thieves upon that road. Going from Jericho to Jerusalem, the eighteen miles is one long, constant climb, mounting from a point 1,200 feet below sea-level to a point 3,000 feet above sea-level. It is with literal accuracy that Luke tells us in xix. 28, "he went on before, going up to Jerusalem."

Picture, Healing of Bartimæus; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 531.)

XXX. A Cry of Discouragement.

1. At the little village of Bethany, about six miles south-east of the city of Jerusalem.

2. A little family of two sisters and a brother. The sisters were Mary and Martha and the brother Lazarus, whom Jesus is reported to have raised from death. (See John xi. also Luke x. 38-42.)

3. A range of low mountains over which the road ran into the city. Jerusalem, as we have seen, was built upon a precipitous rock in the center of a broad shallow valley. The valley was entirely encircled by these low hills. We get a suggestion of the natural location of the city from the words of the Psalm, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about the people." All roads entering into Jerusalem have to scale this encircling barrier of hills.

4. The road from Bethany, travelers tell us, winds gradually

up the outer side of the hill until, nearing the top, it twists around one last intervening shoulder, and brings one with startling suddenness in full view of the city lying snugly on its rock. The sight bursts on the traveler's view with the suddenness and completeness of a magic-lantern picture.

5. It is altogether likely that it was in this bend in the road that Jesus paused to weep over the city. It would be entirely natural that this sudden and beautiful view, flashing upon him, would fill his heart with a rush of feeling. All his hopes and ambitions, all his fears and expectations, over which he had spent weeks of thought and prayer, were given a sudden emphasis by the prospect before him, and proved too much for his self-control.

6. Perhaps he was thinking of the time when, as a small boy of twelve, he had stood upon this very spot and gazed with leaping senses upon this same lovely landscape. The memory would furnish a contrast that would add bitterness to his tears. He was young and hopeful and joyously enthusiastic then. He was defeated and discouraged and sobered by terrible misgivings now. His youthful ambitions of service and of patriotism had been changed into apparent failure. We can quite understand why he wept over the city.

7. He prophesied in his lament that the days would come when Jerusalem's enemies should lay siege to it and entirely overthrow it. This prophecy was perfectly fulfilled when the Emperor Titus besieged the city and overwhelmed it in 70 A.D.

8. Jerusalem was destroyed by Rome because of its own rebelliousness, or, to use Jesus' words, because it did not know the things which belong unto peace. If Christ had been accepted as the Jewish Messiah, he would have taught them the things which belong unto peace. In other words, he would have corrected their false and violent notions of national supremacy which they strove to fulfil by worldly power and conquest, and would have taught them a truer notion of world-supremacy which, under him, they might have fulfilled in the peaceable ways of righteousness and worship. They sought a conquest by the sword, in which they were disappointed.

He would have taught them the bloodless conquests of the spirit, in which they might have succeeded.

9. Doubtless he was thinking of his own failure, but his grief was aroused more by his perception of the impending doom which was rushing upon the city.

10. There were his own twelve disciples, and in addition there may have been an equal number of friends and adherents who had attached themselves to him in Jericho and Bethany; in all, a little company of twenty-five or thirty souls.

11. The annual Passover Feast, the greatest of all Jewish festivals was close at hand. As we have seen, thousands of Jews from all over the world flocked to the city for this annual feast. Every road was dotted by companies of visitors wending their way to the city of their fathers, and by the time the feast begins the little city will be crowded to overflowing with the several million Jews who have come to make their annual pilgrimage. There are men, women, and children; for the Passover festival is not only a great religious occasion, it is also a sort of a family gathering time.

12. Jesus chose this time for his appearance in Jerusalem in order to give his claim the promptest and most extensive publicity possible. So certain was he in his assumption of the Messiahship that he purposely avoided all subterfuge and evasion. He not only went to his doom, but he generously rushed upon his doom. If he failed in winning acceptance, it would not be through any fault of his.

Picture, Christ weeps over Jerusalem, by Eastlake; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 124.)

XXXI. Fulfilling the Prophecy.

1. Bethphage is a little village on the road from Bethany to Jerusalem. It is on the inner slope of the encircling hill not more than two miles from the city gate. The hillside upon which it is situated is called the Mount of Olives.

2. As he approached this village, Jesus sent on two of his disciples to procure a colt upon which he might mount and

enter the city. There was nothing remarkable or miraculous, as it is sometimes supposed, in his foreknowledge that there would be a colt ready for his use in that village. These little animals were very common, and the disciples would be as certain of finding one as a man would be of finding a bronco in the streets of a Western town.

3. They were to say simply, "The Master hath need of him." Jesus knew that the owner of the colt would at once let it be used.

4. They threw their mantles and outer garments over the little beast's back to make a sort of a saddle, and they set Jesus upon him. We are not to imagine from the redundancy in Matthew that Jesus rode both the ass and the colt. It was the colt alone that he used.

5. They cut branches of trees and strewed them in the roadway before him, they also spread their garments in the road, so that the humble beast trod upon a perpetual carpet. This of course implied that the beast which bore so precious a burden should not be allowed to touch the common earth. It was an act of enthusiastic praise which has been frequently done for those whom people wished to especially honor. In addition to this his attendants began to sing and dance about him, shouting Hosannas and giving expression to the usual Jewish tokens of joy and flattery.

6. The word "Hosanna" means literally "save now," or "oh, save," or "save, we beseech thee." The word had become conventionalized into a mere acclamation of delight or enthusiasm. In this sense we still use the word in hymns and anthems.

7. The prophecy is found in Zechariah ix. 9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Behold, thy king cometh unto thee. He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass." It is simply another instance proving Christ's thorough knowledge of the sacred literature of his people. Zechariah had prophesied that the Messiah, when he came, might be identified by the manner in which he entered the city. In order to bear out Zechariah's prophecy and make it apply to himself, Jesus care-

fully fulfils its details in his own entry of Jerusalem. He knew himself to be just; he believed himself to have salvation; he was undoubtedly lowly; it remained only to enter Jerusalem riding upon an ass's colt. This he accordingly does.

8. His action in thus carefully fulfilling the terms of the old prophecy amounted to a tacit claim that he was the man of whom the prophecy was written. And this was the inference which he desired all beholders to draw.

9. Matthew says that all the city was stirred. Mark and Luke both imply that the sensation thus created was a very considerable one. We must remember, however, that the little city of Jerusalem was a very lively place just at that time. Thousands were flocking thither for the Passover. Hundreds of people were entering the city just as Christ did, lowly and riding upon an ass. Scores of local celebrities were attended, just as he was, by little groups of followers who perhaps waved green branches and shouted Hosannas in their master's honor. In view of these things it is hardly safe to imagine that Jesus aroused any especial notice or that his claim received any especial recognition. The fact the people asked who he was might seem to show that he was not well known in Jerusalem either by sight or by reputation. Altogether it was a very humble and pathetic little incident, and yet it was fraught with tremendous consequences.

10. A few Pharisees standing by told him to rebuke his disciples and quiet their exuberant noise. Perhaps this illustrates as well as anything the indifference with which he was received.

11. Jesus said it was no use to quiet them, for, if they should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out. In this reply we get a luminous little hint of his own inner emotions. No one save Jesus himself knew what this action meant, what it had cost, what it would still cost, what a sublime moral victory it represented. The Hosannas and the waving branches might annoy the Pharisees, but they were eminently appropriate to Christ as signalizing his greatest and most recent moral conquest. He knew, as no one else did, that the occasion demanded most fervent expressions of joy. If the disciples

were restrained from giving vent to these expressions, the very stones would break out into singing.

12. Palm Sunday, so called from the palms which the disciples are supposed to have waved in their Master's honor as he entered the city.

Picture, Christ entering Jerusalem, by Plockhorst; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 534.)

XXXII. A Busy Week.

1. It is significant that, having entered the city of Jerusalem as God's Messiah, Jesus went straight to the temple upon Mount Zion. It was fitting that the Messiah should look upon the temple of God as his headquarters, a place over which he had peculiar charge. It was thus that Christ visited the temple, no longer as a private worshiper, but as God's emissary coming to his own.

2. He found the usual state of things, the great marble porticoes thronged with loungers who sat in the shade, or with venders and money-changers who plied their various crafts, or with pedestrians who hurried through from one entrance to another, seeking a short cut upon their errands, just as citizens cross a public square to cut off corners. In other words, he saw the citizens of Jerusalem desecrating the sacred edifice by using it for every purpose under the sun save that for which it was intended.

3. As we have seen, the outer courts of the temple had come to be regarded as a sort of common meeting-place, not unlike the Forum at Rome, not unlike the market-place in any Oriental town or village. Rabbis and Pharisees gathered there to discuss knotty points of law; venders of doves and incense gathered there to pick up the trade of those who came to offer a small sacrifice or to put a few grains of incense on the golden altar; money-changers and public letter-writers gathered there to secure what custom they could, knowing that there would be a good demand for their services.

4. He got him a scourge of small cords, and drove these

loungers and venders out of the temple courts, he upset the tables of the money-changers, and he forbade the pedestrians or bearers of burdens to make a short cut across the enclosure. He reminded them with blazing eyes that this place was a house of prayer, and he told them that they were making it a den of robbers. This action is called the cleansing of the temple. It is his first public action as the self-avowed Messiah of God. Perhaps he would not have presumed to do this as a private citizen, but, claiming to be God's Messiah, there was no evading the duty: he must do it.

5. Naturally, the Pharisees were greatly incensed that a common person should assume the authority to do such things as this. This action of his was perhaps what first attracted the attention of the Pharisees to his claims. Their efforts to overthrow him begin with this event.

6. They asked him point blank by what authority he did these things, meaning not only his cleansing of the temple, but his preaching and arguing in the temple courts.

7. This of course was a very embarrassing question, and it was so intended. To answer the question in either way that is possible would be to play into their hands and to put himself at their mercy. For, if he replied that the authority by which he did these things was a self-assumed authority, they would properly charge him with being a meddler and an impostor; if he replied that his authority came from the Roman officials, he would be at once the victim of a popular riot; and, if he replied that his authority came from God, they would say at once that he was a blasphemer. It was an exceedingly crafty question, and one for which there was no safe answer. However, he met them on their own ground, by asking them a question equally embarrassing.

8. He asked whether they considered John's right to baptize a right that had been derived from God or from man. "The baptism of John, whence was it, from Heaven or from men?"

9. They in turn were in a dilemma. If they reply that they considered it a right derived from God, he would retort, "Why, then, did ye not believe in him, and let him baptize you?" But

if they reply that they considered it a right derived only from men, merely a worthless human office, they would lay themselves open to the indignation of the common people with whom John had been a great favorite, and who considered him a veritable prophet of God. They could not answer his question without exposing themselves either to ridicule or violence. They accordingly said just what Jesus knew they would say: "We know not. We cannot answer." Whereupon Jesus refuses to answer their question. This incident simply shows the sleepless tact and shrewdness with which Jesus countered every thrust and evaded every trap which they set for him.

10. He was acquiring a dangerous influence over the common people. They must either discredit him with the common people or he would discredit them and destroy their influence.

11. The first son corresponds to the true-hearted but unconventional reformer, like John and himself, who were anxious to do the Father's work, but who were not particular to do it through the accepted methods of ceremony and formalism and ecclesiasticism. The second son corresponds to the Scribes and Priests and Pharisees, who by their punctilious observance of the ceremonies and forms of religious usage appear to be giving consent to the Father's request, but who at heart are flatly denying that request.

12. In Bethany. Perhaps the city was so full of Passover guests that he found it necessary to go to Bethany each night for his lodgings.

Picture, Jesus turns out the Money Changers, by Kirchbuck; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 51.)

XXXIII. The Last Meal Together.

1. Because they feared that, if they arrested him, they would precipitate a riot among the common people, who looked upon him as a prophet and who would do all in their power to rescue him. We must bear in mind that during Passover Week the

city of Jerusalem was a very turbulent place. The Jewish nature is headstrong and impulsive, anyway, but during Pass-over Week these smouldering impulses were greatly aggravated, and were in momentary danger of breaking out into acts of open violence on the slightest provocation. The Pharisees feared this tendency as much as the Roman government, and were hence reluctant to arrest a popular favorite at a time when popular prejudice would be most ready to revolt in his behalf.

2. Judas Iscariot. We know nothing at all about Judas. It is hard to think that he was really a traitor to his Master. His remorse after his Master's death is not what we would expect of a traitor. Moreover, there is no motive apparent for such an act of treachery. The thirty pieces of silver would not be compensation enough for a real traitor. Judas was probably over-zealous and over-confident in his advocacy of his Master's Messiahship. He was so certain that his Master possessed a divine immunity from danger that he anticipated no difficulty whatever in his being able to extricate himself by superhuman means from any peril in which he might be placed. By betraying him to the Pharisees, Judas would put him in mortal danger, and would force him to call upon his supernatural resources in order to escape. Thus Christ's divine character would at once be made manifest to all beholders, and his Messiahship would be at once established and recognized. This was probably Judas' motive. He was simply forcing his Master's hand.

3. Two of the disciples, Peter and John, were to go into the city, where they would meet a man bearing a pitcher of water. They were to follow him to the house which he should enter, and ask him for a room where their Master might eat the Passover. He would show them a large upper chamber.

4. There was the table to arrange, a suitable lamb to be purchased, inspected, blessed, and ceremonially slaughtered by a priest in the temple, and then properly cooked. There were wine, bitter herbs, and unleavened bread, to be procured.

5. The people gathered in companies of ten or twelve, each under its president. Each company met in its own room for

the feast. First they had a cup of red wine over which a blessing was uttered. The president then ate a mouthful of bitter herbs and gave a portion to each of his companions. Then came a second cup of wine, after which the youngest member of the company asked, "Why is this night distinguished from all other nights?" The president answered the question by reciting the whole national history from patriarchal times to the deliverance from Egypt, explaining the significance of the lamb, the herbs, and the unleavened bread. The company then sang Psalms cxiii., cxiv. Then came the course of unleavened bread, followed by the lamb itself. Then came a third cup of wine, and they sang Psalms cxv.-cxviii. Then the fourth and last cup of wine. The last thing was the benediction. We see from this that the feast partook largely of the nature of a religious service.

6. Probably on Thursday. 7. In the evening. According to the Jewish reckoning what we call Thursday evening would be the beginning of Friday.

8. He said that one of them should betray him. Perhaps his intuition warned him that the over-confident Judas would get him into trouble.

9. Each began to ask, "Is it I?" The disciples appear very ready to agree to the possibility that one of them should betray him. We should like them better if they had denied flatly. Perhaps they felt such confidence in Christ's prophetic power that they did not think of denying such a prediction, but simply asked who should be the one.

10. Christ was, doubtless, the president of this Passover company. When it came time for the unleavened bread, he, of course, blessed it and divided it, and, as he handed it to them, he gave the action a more personal significance by saying, "Take and eat: this is my body which is given for you." He did the same with the fourth cup of wine. Thus he made the feast not only a Passover, but a feast of farewell and of remembrance.

11. By the sacrament of the Last Supper, or the Lord's Supper, or the Communion, however it may be called, which is held in most of our churches at regular times during the

year. We try to make the service precisely what Christ meant it to be, a service of remembrance of Christ and of consecration to his ideals.

12. They sang their last hymn, and went out upon the Mount of Olives.

Picture, *The Last Supper*, by Da Vinci; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 131.)

XXXIV. The Darkest Hour.

1. James and John. These two men with Peter were Christ's favorite friends. They understood him better and gave him more sympathy, such as it was, than any of the other disciples. We have frequently seen how Jesus asks them to accompany him into places where the other disciples are not allowed to go. Thus he asks them to go with him into the garden, and yet even their companionship is not wholly desirable at just this time. So full of sacred feeling is this moment that Jesus feels the need of being entirely alone. So he leaves them at a certain spot in the garden, bidding them wait and watch with him, while he goes forward into some dim and secluded recess, and there kneels at the base of a great rock, and pours out his troubled soul to his Heavenly Father.

2. He realized that his time had come. The greatest sacrifice which a man could make was at hand. Firm as he might be in his purpose, he could not resist the anguish and terror of soul which this sacrifice must ever cause.

3. "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass away from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

4. They were fast asleep. This shows pretty clearly how little they understood him, how little they realized what terrible agony had possessed his soul. Added to the horrors of physical suffering and death was the crowning horror of utter loneliness.

5. Of himself. It has been supposed that the words referred to the disciples, and were meant as an excuse for their having dropped asleep. But the words are far more luminous when

we understand them as referring to Christ himself. It was his spirit which was willing to undergo this act of supreme self-denial; it was his flesh which in its human weakness shrank from the pain and mockery which that act of self-denial would entail.

6. Three times. Each time he came back, and found the disciples sleeping. His agony was long drawn out, but at last the final temptation of weakness was put away, the faltering spirit was fortified, and in a renewed strength and calmness he faces the issue.

7. Judas appeared with a company of the High Priest's servants and retainers, armed with swords and staves, as though expecting resistance from his hot-headed Galilean disciples, when they should attempt to arrest him.

8. Judas went up to his Master with the words, "Hail, Master," and kissed him. This was the ordinary method of salutation, and this was the preconcerted sign by which Judas had agreed to identify his Master to the men who were to arrest him. The fact that Christ had to be thus identified is cited as proof that Christ was not well known in Jerusalem. It is also cited as proof of the old legendary notion that James the Less, one of the disciples, was Christ's own brother, who resembled him so closely in personal appearance that none but intimate friends could tell them apart.

9. Read the account in John xviii. 1-11, which is in some respects more circumstantial than the accounts in the other Gospels. According to this version, it was Simon Peter who whipped out his sword and smote off the ear of one of the servants of the High Priest. This action is entirely characteristic of the impetuous Simon.

10. They all left him and fled. This was a very comprehensible but deplorable action on their part. Being so closely identified with Christ, they naturally feared that they would be arrested with him and would be forced to suffer the same punishment. It is just at this point that he towers so far above them in his courage and fidelity. Where they were cowardly, he was intrepid. Where they were weak, he was staunch. The first approach of the danger which he had all along fore-

seen and which he had nobly nerved himself to meet was sufficient to make them turn and flee.

11. He meant, Let this great sorrow, let this great anguish and pain, pass from me without my having to experience it.

12. The arrest probably took place late Thursday evening, after their Passover Feast.

Picture, Jesus in Gethsemane, by Hofmann; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 136.)

XXXV. The End.

1. To the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest. It was necessary first to fix upon him some crime that was a capital offense according to their Jewish law. Therefore, he was first tried by the Jewish council before the Jewish priest.

2. Simon Peter. In spite of his timidity Peter was a loyal, warm-hearted man, who could not resist following his Master, howbeit stealthily and in the hope that he would not be known as one of his disciples. On several occasions during the night Peter was given a great fright by being asked if he were not one of the followers of this Nazarene. Each time Peter violently denied the imputation, not being brave enough to acknowledge his relationship to Jesus when such a relationship might be the cause of his own arrest as one of Christ's aiders and abettors.

3. They brought many trivial accusations against him, as that he had said that he was able to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days. None of these accusations, however, could be magnified even by their bitter prejudice into a capital offense. Finally, in desperation the High Priest rose, and asked him directly if he claimed to be the Christ of God. Jesus quietly and bravely replied that he did, thus sealing his own doom. This was all the High Priest wanted. Rending his clothes in mock horror at so preposterous a claim, he appealed to the council if this were not blasphemy and if he were not guilty of death. The council agreed to this suggestion, and passed the sentence upon him.

4. To the palace of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea.

5. They might condemn a culprit to death, but inasmuch as they were the Jewish council, and inasmuch as Judea was a Roman province, it was necessary for them to get their sentence ratified by the Roman official before it could be actually carried out. Therefore, they brought him to Pilate with this curt demand: "Here is a man whom we have found worthy of death for an offense against our Jewish law. We want you to ratify our sentence and have him executed." This had the effect of putting Christ's life into Pilate's hands. If Pilate refused to ratify that sentence, they could not harm him. On the other hand, they could bring a great deal of pressure to bear upon Pilate to induce him to ratify their sentence. They could instigate one of those Judean riots which the Roman governor always dreaded, and the reason for which would be found by his master, the Roman emperor, to lie in his own lack of tact and efficiency, and for this lack of efficiency he would be recalled from his office. In order to hold his office, Pilate must not allow any popular uprisings or tumults, for they would be taken as proof of his own incompetence to handle the province. In order to evade a popular tumult, Pilate would have to grant their request and ratify the sentence. While it is true that Christ's life depended upon Pilate, it is also true that poor Pilate was in a painfully delicate position. He was torn between his self-interest and his sense of justice.

6. After asking one or two questions of Jesus, Pilate decided that the man was not worthy of death, but that he was merely the victim of the hatred and prejudice of the Priests and Pharisees. He therefore tried honestly to save Christ's life. His sense of justice was strong. He both surprises us and wins our gratitude by the persistence with which he endangers his own standing in the effort to save Christ. That he finally succumbs to the call of self-interest and condemns Jesus in order to avert the threatened riot which would mean his own political ruin is not to be wondered at, when we remember that he was a proud and supercilious Roman, while Jesus was nothing but an obscure Galilean peasant. He tells the Priests repeatedly

that he finds no fault in Jesus. He suggests that he give Jesus the benefit of the old Passover custom, by which one prisoner each year was released. Seeing that the multitude is determined that Christ shall undergo some punishment, he orders his soldiers to scourge him, crown him with thorns, and array him in a purple mantle, and he then leads him out onto the balcony and shows him to the crowd in this pitiable condition, in the hope that the crowd will be placated by the sight of these sufferings and will consent to his liberation. Pilate is balked at every turn by the implacable fury of the mob, who, incited by the priests, merely cried the louder, "Crucify him."

7. Pilate saw that the dreaded tumult was fast arising. He saw that nothing save a ratification of the death sentence would avert that tumult. Accordingly, he called for a basin of water, and symbolically washed his hands of the whole affair. This was tantamount to a consent that Jesus should die. Jesus was then given over to the executioners.

8. They scourged him and crowned him with thorns, and arrayed him in a coarse purple mantle, and put a reed in his hand in mocking reference to his claim of being the king of the Jews. Then they kneeled before him in mock homage and said, "Hail, king of the Jews."

9. It was customary for culprits to bear their own cross to the place of execution. Jesus was too weak for this burden, and so they obliged a man named Simon, a Cyrenian, to bear the cross for him. Read the account in John, chapters xviii. and xix.

10. Not more than three or four hours. Culprits usually lingered on the cross three or four days, but Jesus was evidently so exhausted by all he had been through that death came quickly.

11. "It is finished." According to Luke the last words were, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." According to Matthew and Mark, the last words were the first verse of Psalm xxii.

12. Joseph of Arimathea, who was a member of the council, but who had not consented to the sentence of death. Jesus was crucified Friday forenoon. He died probably late Friday

afternoon. With twilight on Friday evening the Sabbath would begin, on which day no unclean thing like a dead body might remain above ground. The haste with which Jesus was buried was due to the necessity of getting him under ground before the Sabbath began.

Picture, Golgotha, by Gérôme; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 153.) Also, Ecce Homo, by Ciseri; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 143.)

XXXVI. Conclusion.

1. His fidelity to the duty which the voice of God whispered to him.

2. He was a man of sorrows in that there were in his life the deepest and most cruel sorrows that the human heart can know. Yet his satisfaction in the consciousness that he was a beloved Son of God, and that he was faithful without fault to the ruling voice of God, was deeper and more profound than the sorrows. He was a man of sorrows, and at the same time he was a man of sublimer and more glorious joys.

3. That God loves His human creatures with the warm and tender love of a father. Heretofore God had been considered a just, righteous, and rather stern ruler. Jesus taught that in addition to His justice and righteousness there was in His heart a love that was infinitely tender and warm and patient.

4. Of an intimate sonship. He always speaks of God as his father. He always thinks of God as of a being who lived with him and protected him and loved him like a father.

5. No. He calls himself in some places the Son of God, but he calls other men the Sons of God, or the children of God. He speaks of God as his Heavenly Father, to be sure, but he speaks of Him just as often as the Heavenly Father of all men and women. This filial relationship with God was, according to him, open to all who wished to enjoy it and who would make themselves worthy of it. He claims nothing for himself that he does not as freely offer unto others and urge others to enjoy.

6. In the relation of brothers, loving each other, forgiving

each other, and helping each other, as befits those who are the children of one common father who loves and forgives all alike.

7. If we mean by "Christ" a prince and warrior who should come to make the Jews a world-supreme nation, he was not the Christ. He did not mean any such thing by "Christ." To his mind "Christ" was one who should come to lead his nation into a truer and closer union with the life of God. This he did. Two thousand years of Christian civilization have amply vindicated his claim of being the Christ. He is our type and model of true and noble manhood.

8. As a nation, no. The orthodox Jews are still expecting their Messiah. Those few Jews who have accepted him as their Christ are no longer Jews, but Christians. The liberal-minded Jews look upon him as a noble and fearless member of their race, they class him with their prophets perhaps, but they do not think of him as their Christ.

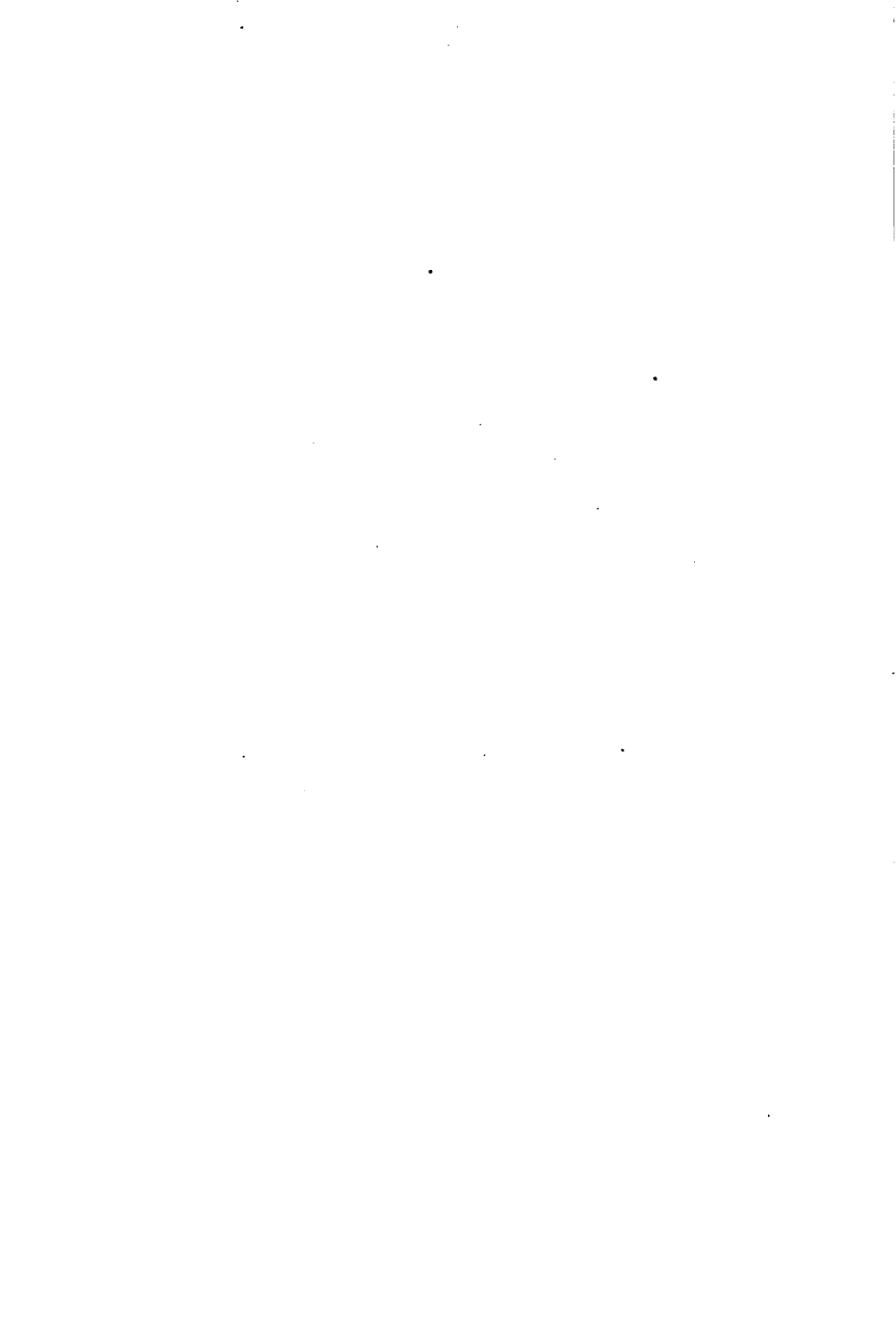
9. He might have been between thirty and forty years old.

10. That his body had come to life again, and had risen out of the tomb; that he appeared and spoke to his friends upon several occasions after his crucifixion, and that he was finally taken up into heaven.

11. The legend is a beautiful symbol of the profound spiritual truth that the spirit of Christ cannot perish and cannot be imprisoned in rocky tombs. It lives in the hearts and lives of all men and women, in all times and places, who love him and honor him and try to make their lives as noble and pure as his.

12. Easter Sunday.

Picture, First Easter Dawn, by Thomson; (Wilde's Bible Pictures, No. 399.)



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